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DISCOURSES

ON SEVERAL

Important Subjects.

By the Late REVEREND

DANIEL WILLIAMS, D. D.

Publiſhed ſingly by HIMSELF, and now collected by the Appointment of his Will.

VOL. V.

To which is added,

His Funeral Sermon preached by Dr. EVANS.

LONDON:

Printed by JAMES WAUGH, at the *Turk's Head*, in *Lombard-Street*.

MDCCL.

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A N

END TO DISCORD:

Wherein is demonſtrated,

That no Doctrinal Controverſy remains between the *Preſbyterian* and *Congregational* Miniſters, fit to juſtify longer Diviſions.

With a true Account of

SOCINIANISM

As to the Satisfaction of Christ.

Printed in the Year 1699.

EPISTLE
TO THE
READER.

IF Arguments *might induce Chriſtians to Peace, it were enough to ſay, nothing is more expreſsly required than* Chriſtian Concord *by our Lord Jeſus, or more commended from its heavenly Original and happy Fruits; nor ſcarce any thing more warned againſt, as obſtructing the Kingdom of Chriſt, advantagious to Satan's Intereſt, deſtructive to Religion, yea to Civil Society, and repugnant to the very* Deſign *and* Spirit *of the Goſpel, as well as to the mutual Uſefulneſs of men, than uncharitable and dividing* Contentions *be. The only reaſon that can be ſuggeſted to acquit ſuch* Contenders *from notorious Guilt muſt be, that it is* for the Faith of the Goſpel *that they contend. But it's worth our ſerious thoughts, that as even this cannot excuſe a rigid, cenſorious, envenomed Spirit, or unhallowed*

Methods in our ſtruggles for Truth; ſo no other than a direct Oppoſition to the Eſſentials of ſome fundamental Article *can warrant Diviſions, or refuſals of Communion, on the account of mere difference in the Faith, provided* no Aſſent to any real Error *is impoſed on us as a* Term of Union.

It is too obvious to require Proof, that if a direct Oppoſition to what is not fundamental, *or to whatever* remotely *belongs to that which is ſo; nay further, if oppoſing by* denied Conſequences *what is of the Eſſence of any fundamental Article of Faith; be a warrant for* Separation *of Miniſters and Churches from each other, then the* inſtituted Rules *of Chriſtian Fellowſhip do not oblige us; the* approved Inſtances *of Communion in the New-Teſtament-Churches ought to be condemned; and all the Churches of Chriſt muſt daily be more and more* rended *by Non-communion and dividing Animoſities, until the* Catholick Church *loſe all ſhew of* Unity, *or be reduced to a ſingle Congregation, (and that but for an uncertain moment,) even when vaſt numbers of* Chriſtian Societies *proclaim the advancement of our Saviour's conqueſt.*

Nor is their Folly leſs apparent, who (for excuſe of this) ſurmiſe, that every Error *which they ought to rectify in themſelves, and by juſt methods to reform in others, is a* Bar *to Communion; or yet, that* Separation

is

is one of thoſe juſt methods *in the caſe fore-mentioned, eſpecially towards ſuch over whom they pretend to no Authority. Oh when will men ſee, that Chriſt's Royal* Prerogative *is aſſumed, whenever* other Terms *of, or* Bars *to Communion are invented, than what He hath expreſsly made ſuch, and that in a matter wherein his own Honour and his People's Intereſt are concerned, next to that of Union with himſelf!*

But alas! in contempt of Rules ſo neceſſary to the Churches Peace, many Ages are filled with Inſtances of aſſuming a right to account him for a Heathen, *who differs but in Trifles, and cannot pronounce their very* Phraſes, *tho' ſcrupled becauſe abuſed to ſupport an Error, and the Truth deſigned by them is moſt expreſsly owned: A thing ſo thwarting a Chriſtian Temper, that* Athanaſius *and* Baſil *profeſs they would break with none who refuſed the word* ομοουσιος, *ſo they would by any words declare their ſoundneſs in the Doctrine of the* Trinity; *and yet that word had been adjuſted, not by a few particular Authors, but by the great* Council of Nice, *in oppoſition to the Hereſy of* Arius. *I ſcruple not to ſay, an* Antichriſtian *Spirit moſt effectually extinguiſheth the like Moderation; and ſuch Impoſers, intruſted with the* Secular *Sword, would uſe it as they do their*

Eccleſiaſtical, *however they condemn Severity while* themſelves *are not the Perſecutors.*

That there have been of late years great Diviſions *among the* Diſſenters, *is too publickly known: And I had rather ſhare in the Imputation of an Acceſſary, than perpetuate them by the fulleſt Vindication; hoping that a calm Seaſon will better fit all of us to reflect, and repent of our Faultineſs, eſpecially the* Unchriſtian *management of our Debates; for which, we have great reaſon to pray, God would not ſignally contend hereafter.*

But bleſſed be the Name of our God, that ere we be quite devoured by each other, *a fit Occaſion is miniſtred for our healing; and tho' Self-preſervation hath been my work ever ſince my temperate Confutation of Dr.* Criſp, *(and then too,) none will wonder I take hold of this Opportunity, to evidence that* further Conteſts *will be inexcuſable. Nor is it a hard Province, when the* united Miniſters, *and the* Congregational Brethren, *have ſo far acquitted themſelves: The* firſt, *by ſundry former Accounts (and now more enlarged, from any word in which I cannot ſuſpect two will differ,) of their Vindication from Errors concerning the* Satisfaction *of Chriſt, and* Juſtification, *which are the only Points objected: The* laſt, *by their* Declaration againſt Antinomian

tinomian Errors; *for which I am too thankful, to remark its Stings; and had it come out before my* Poſtſcript, *I durſt not have repreſented their Judgment by the Conſequences of their Objections, (however natural,) as in ſome few things is done. That the* God of Peace *would give us Peace, is the unfeigned Prayer of*

Thy Servant in the Goſpel, and Brother in the Kingdom and Patience of our Lord Jeſus,

Daniel Williams.

Note, The Edition of the Works of *Socinus*, &c. to which I refer, is that printed in *Folio*, *Irenopoli*, 1656.

INTRODUCTION.

AS the too visible Progress of *Antinomianism* grieved us, and obliged our Defence of the Truth, and a Gospel-Ministry; so we must rejoice in the *Congregational Ministers Declaration against Antinomian Errors*, well knowing the infected will more regard the Judgment of these Brethren, because of their Agreement with them in matters of Church-Discipline.

WE are sorry they were not a little sooner prevailed with to give this Testimony; for then we had not been forced in *the Answer to the Report*, to hint some of the Reasons inducing us to think many of them espoused, and the generality of them in this City too much countenanced *Antinomianism*, with its open Abettors. Nor dare we indulge a Temper so devilish, as for Party-sake to repine at these Brethren acquitting themselves from those imputed Errors: But on the contrary, we gladly endeavour

deavour to procure Peace by this *Declaration* of theirs; for which desirable end, we shall overlook all the Reflections contained therein against us; and not refuse to acquit ourselves once more from all *hurtful Errors concerning Christ's Satisfaction, and our Justification,* (altho' so fully and often done heretofore, that our Brethren's Insinuation to the contrary doth not a little surprize us;) and, which is principally aimed at, we hope it will appear, that in all that's *material,* both our Brethren *agree with us* in our Testimony against *Antinomianism,* and we *agree with them* in a disapproval of the other Extreams. To evidence which, we shall repeat, (1.) Our Testimony against Dr. *Crisp*'s Errors, when so many were indangered by his *reprinted* Books. (2.) Some part of our former Declarations against *Popish, Socinian,* and *Arminian* Errors, when our Brethren accused us thereof for subscribing the foresaid Testimony against *Crispianism.* (3.) We shall give an account of our Congregational Brethren's *Declaration against Antinomian Errors.* (4.) We shall evidence that this, taken together and examined with Candor, ought to be acknowledged a sufficient Vindication of the Approvers thereof from all *hurtful Antinomian Errors.* (5.) We shall add our further Testimony against Errors about *Christ's Satisfaction,*

tisfaction, and *Juſtification.* If Peace at leaſt müſt not be allowed us after this, we muſt bewail a judicial ſtroke, and expect to be deſpiſed by ſuch, who perceive our common hurt from theſe Debates, but have not Judgment to diſtinguiſh between the injured Seekers of Peace, and the injurious Fomenters of Trouble.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The State of Truth and Error, (ſubſcribed by near Fifty of us,) drawn up and publiſhed by Mr. Williams, *in a Book called* Goſpel-Truth ſtated and vindicated, *firſt printed in the Year* 1692.

Truth 1. IT is *certain* from God's decree of election, that the Elect ſhall in time be juſtified, adopted, and ſaved *in the way* God hath appointed; and the whole meritorious cauſe and price of Juſtification, Adoption, and eternal Life, were perfect, when Chriſt *finiſhed* the work of Satisfaction. Nevertheleſs, the Elect *remain* children of wrath, and ſubject to condemnation, *till* they are effectually called by the operation of the Spirit. CHAP. I.

Error. THE Elect are *at no time* of their lives under the wrath of God; nor are they ſubject to condemnation, if they ſhould die *before* they believe; yea, when they are under the dominion of Sin, and in the practice of the groſſeſt Villainies, they

CHAP. I. they are *as much* the Sons of God, and juſtified, as the very Saints in Glory.

Truth 2. THO' *our Sins* were imputed to Chriſt with reſpect to the *Guilt* thereof, ſo that he, by the Father's appointment, and his own conſent, became obliged, as Mediator, to bear the *Puniſhment* of our Iniquities; and he did bear thoſe Puniſhments to the *full Satisfaction of Juſtice*, and to our actual Remiſſion when we believe; nevertheleſs, the *Filth* of our Sins was not laid upon Chriſt; nor can he be called the Tranſgreſſor, or was he in God's account the Blaſphemer, Murtherer, *&c.*

Error. GOD did not only impute the Guilt, and lay the Puniſhment of the Sins of the Elect upon Chriſt; but he laid all the very Sins of the Elect upon Chriſt, and that, as to their *real Filthineſs and Loathſomeneſs*; yea ſo, that Chriſt was *really* the Blaſphemer, Murtherer, and Sinner, and ſo accounted by the Father.

Truth 3. THE Atonement made by Chriſt, by the appointment of God, is that, *for which alone* the Elect are pardoned, when it is applied to them. But the Elect are not immediately pardoned upon Chriſt's being appointed to ſuffer for them, nor as ſoon as the Atonement was made; nor is that Act of laying Sins on Chriſt, God's

God's forgiving Act, by which we are *personally discharged.* CHAP. I.

Error. THE very Act of God's laying Sins on Christ upon the Cross, is the very *actual discharge* of all the Elect from all their Sins.

Truth 4. AN Elect person ceaseth not to be a Sinner, upon the laying of our Sins upon Christ; that is, he remains a Sinner, as to the *Guilt*, till he believes, if adult. He is a Sinner, as to the *Filth* of Sin, till he be sanctified. He is a Sinner, as to the charge of the sinful *Fact* he commits, and that even after Pardon and Sanctification. Nevertheless, he is free from the *Curse*, when he is pardoned; and shall be purged from all the Filth of Sin, when he is perfect in Holiness. And tho' Christ did bear the Punishment of our Iniquity, yet it never was Christ's Iniquity, but *ours.*

Error. THE Elect upon the death of Christ ceased to be Sinners; and *ever since* their Sins are none of *their Sins*, but they are the Sins of *Christ.*

Truth 5. THE *Obligation* of suffering for our Sins was upon Christ, from his undertaking the office of a Mediator, to the moment wherein he finished his satisfactory Atonement. The *Punishment* of our Sins lay upon Christ, from the first

CHAP. I. first moment, to the last of his state of Humiliation.

Error. THE time when our Sins were laid *actually* on Christ, was, when he was nailed to the Cross, and God actually forsook him; and they continued on him *till* his Resurrection.

Truth 6. THO' God testified his threatned *Indignation* against Sin, in the awful Sufferings of Christ's Soul and Body in his Agony, and suspended those *delightful* Communications of the Divine Nature to the Human Nature of Christ, as to their wonted degrees; yet God was never *separated* from Christ, much less during his Body's lying in the grave; neither was the Father ever displeased with Christ, and far less did he *abhor* him, because of the *Filthiness* of Sin upon him.

Error. CHRIST was on the account of the *Filthiness* of Sins, while they lay upon him, *separated* from God, *odious* to him, and even the Object of God's *Abhorrence*, and this to the time of his Resurrection.

Truth 7. THE Mediatorial *Righteousness of Christ* is so imputed to true Believers, as that for the sake thereof they are pardoned and accepted unto Life eternal; it being reckoned to them, and *pleadable* by them for these uses, as if they had personally

sonally done and suffered what Christ did as Mediator *for them*; whereby they are delivered from the Curse, and no other Atonement nor meriting Price of saving Benefits can be demanded from them. Nevertheless, this Mediatorial Righteousness is not subjectively in them, nor is there a *Change of Person* betwixt them and Christ; neither are they *as righteous as he*, but there remain Spots and Blemishes in them, until Christ by his Spirit perfect that Holiness begun in all true Believers; which he will effect, before he brings them to Heaven. *See the* 2d *Truth*; *and note, it is only Dr.* Crisp's *Change of Person is denied*, viz. *a perfect Change which makes us as righteous as he*, &c. *but not Christ's* dying in our stead, *which in this Book is oft asserted.* CHAP. I.

Error. EVERY Believer, or Elect person, is as righteous as Christ, and there is a *perfect Change* of Person and Condition betwixt Christ and the Elect; he was what we are, *viz.* as sinful as we; and we are what he was, *viz.* perfectly holy, and without spot or blemish.

Truth 8. I SHALL express it in the words of the *Assembly*: "The Grace of "God is manifested in the *second Cove-* "*nant*, in that he freely provideth, and "offereth to Sinners a Mediator, and Life "and Salvation by him; and requiring "Faith

CHAP. I. " Faith as the *Condition* to intereſt them " in him, promiſeth and giveth his holy " Spirit to all his Elect, to work in them " that Faith, with all other ſaving Graces; " and to enable them unto all Obedience, " as the evidence of the truth of their " Faith and Thankfulneſs to God, and as " the way which he hath appointed them " to Salvation." *Note, Reader, that theſe Divines do here join together the* Covenant of Redemption *with Chriſt, and the* Goſpel-Covenant *whereby are diſpenſed to us the Benefits impetrated by Chriſt; which two diſtinguiſhed would lead to clearer thoughts.*

Error. THE *Covenant of Grace* hath *no Condition* to be performed on man's part, tho' in the ſtrength of Chriſt: Neither is *Faith* itſelf the Condition of this Covenant; but all the ſaving benefits of this Covenant, are actually ours *before* we are born: Neither are we *required* ſo much as to believe, that we may come to have an Intereſt in the benefits of the Covenant.

Truth 9. I SHALL expreſs this in the words of the *Aſſembly*, and *Congregational Elders* at the *Savoy*, of *ſaving Faith*:

Confeſſ. & Decl. *chap.* xiv. a. 2. " By this grace, a Chriſtian *believeth* to be " true whatever is revealed in the Word, " for the authority of God ſpeaking there- " in; and *acteth* differently upon that " which *each* particular Paſſage thereof con- " taineth;

" taineth; yielding Obedience to the CHAP.
" Commands, trembling at the Threat- I.
" nings, and embracing the Promiſes of
" God, for this life, and that which is
" to come. But the principal Acts of
" ſaving Faith, are *accepting*, *receiving*,
" and *reſting* upon Chriſt alone for Juſti-
" fication, Sanctification, and eternal Life,
" by *virtue* of the Covenant of Grace."

Error. SAVING *Faith* is nothing but our *Perſuaſion*, or abſolute concluding within ourſelves, that our Sins are pardoned, and that Chriſt is ours.

Truth 10. CHRIST is freely *offered* to be a Head and Saviour to the *vileſt* Sinners, who will knowingly aſſent to the truth of the Goſpel, and from a conviction of their Sin and Miſery out of Chriſt are humbled, and *truly willing* to renounce all their Idols and Sins; and denying their own *carnal* Self and Merits, accept of Chriſt as offered in the Goſpel; relying on him alone, for Juſtification, Sanctification, and eternal Life.

Error. CHRIST is offered to Blaſphemers, Murtherers, and the worſt of Sinners; that they, *remaining* ignorant, unconvinced, unhumbled, and reſolved in their purpoſe to continue ſuch, may be aſſured they have a full Intereſt in Chriſt; and this, by *only concluding* in their own minds upon this Offer, that Chriſt is theirs.

CHAP. I.

Truth 11. EVERY man is without Chriſt, or *not united* to Chriſt, until he be effectually called: But when by this Call the Spirit of God inclineth and enableth him willingly to accept of Chriſt as a Head and Saviour, a man becomes *united* to him, and a partaker of thoſe Influences and Privileges which are peculiar to the members of the Lord Jeſus.

Error. ALL the Elect are *actually united* to Chriſt, *before* they have the Spirit of Chriſt, or at all believe in him, even before they are born; yea, and againſt their Will.

Truth 12. THO' *Faith* be no way a meritorious Cauſe of a Sinner's Juſtification, yet God hath promiſed to juſtify all ſuch as truly believe; and requires Faith, as an indiſpenſable qualification in all whom he will juſtify for Chriſt's merits; declaring, that Unbelief ſhall not only hinder men's *knowing* that they are juſtified, but that it is a bar to any perſon's *being* juſtified *while* he continues an Unbeliever.

Error. THE *whole uſe* of Faith in Juſtification, is only to *manifeſt* that we were juſtified before; and *Faith* is no way neceſſary to bring a Sinner into a juſtified State, nor *at all uſeful* to that end.

In

In a Digression there about Repentance, *is added,* CHAP. I.

Truth. ALTHO' neither Faith nor Repentance be any part of the meriting Righteousness *for which* we are justified; and the Habits of both are wrought at the same time, and included in the regenerating principle; and there must be an assenting act of Faith, before there be any exercise of true Repentance; and *Repentance,* as consisting in the fruits meet for it, *viz.* an external Reformation and a fruitful Life, must *follow Pardon,* as doth also an ingenuous Sorrow for Sin in the sense of Pardon: Nevertheless *Repentance,* as it consists in some degree of Humblings and Sorrow, from convictions of our lost State and the Evil of Sin, with a sincere purpose of Heart to turn from our Sin and Idols to God, is *absolutely necessary* in order to the forgiveness of Sin.

Error. OUR Sins are forgiven *before* any Repentance; and Believers *ought not* to complain, or mourn, or sorrow for the Sins they have committed.

Truth 13. THO' neither Holiness, sincere Obedience, or good Works, do make any *Atonement* for Sin; or are in the least the *meritorious Righteousness,* whereby Salvation is caused, or *for which* this, or any Blessing, becomes *due to us as of debt:* Yet as the Spirit of Christ freely worketh all

CHAP. I. Holineſs in the Soul, and enableth us to ſincere Obedience and good Works; ſo the Lord Jeſus hath *of Grace*, and for his own Merits, promiſed to bring to Heaven ſuch as are partakers of true Holineſs, as perform this ſincere Obedience, and do theſe good Works perſeveringly; and appoints theſe as the way and means of a Believer's obtaining Salvation, and ſeveral other Bleſſings; *requiring* theſe as indiſpenſable duties and qualifications of all ſuch whom he will ſo ſave and bleſs, and *excluding* all that want or neglect them, or live under the power of what's contrary thereto, *viz.* Profaneneſs, Rebellion, and utter Unfruitfulneſs.

Error. MEN have nothing to do *in order* to Salvation; nor is Sanctification a jot *the way* of any perſon to Heaven: Nor can the Graces or Duties of Believers, no, nor *Faith* itſelf, do them the *leaſt Good*, or prevent the leaſt Evil; nor are they of any uſe to their *Peace* or Comfort; yea, tho' Chriſt be explicitely owned, and they be done in the ſtrength of the Spirit of God: And a Believer ought not to think, he is *more pleaſing* to God by any Grace he acteth, or Good he doth; nor may men *expect any Good* to a Nation, by the Humiliation, earneſt Prayer, or Reformation of a People.

Truth. 14. THO' we ought to intend *God's*

God's Glory as our supream End in all our Duties, and to design therein the expressing our Love and *Gratitude* to God for his Benefits, with a great regard *to publick Good:* Yet we also lawfully may, and ought to strive after Grace, to grow in it, and to perform holy Duties and Services, with an *Eye to*, and *Concern for* our own spiritual and eternal Advantage. CHAP. I.

Error. No man ought to propose to himself *any Advantage* by any religious Duty he performeth; nor ought he *in the least* to intend the Profit of his own Soul by any Christian Endeavours; it being vain and unlawful to do any thing with an Eye to *our spiritual* or *eternal Good*, tho' in *Subordination* to God's Glory in Christ.

Truth 15. THE *ordinary way* whereby a man attaineth a well-grounded *Assurance*, is not by *immediate* objective Revelation, or an inward Voice saying, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee:* But when the Believer is *examining* his Heart and Life *by the Word*, the holy Spirit *enlightens* the mind there to discern Faith, and Love, and such other qualifications, which the Gospel declareth to be infallible *Signs* of Regeneration; and he adds such *power* to the Testimony of *Conscience*, for the truth and in-being of these Graces, as begets in the Soul a joyful sense of its reconciled State, and some comfortable freedom from

CHAP. I. thoſe Fears which accompany a doubting Chriſtian: And according to the evidence of theſe Graces, *Aſſurance* is *ordinarily* ſtrong or weak.

Error. ASSURANCE is not attained by the *Evidence* of Scripture-marks or *Signs* of Grace, or by the Spirit's *diſcovering* to us that he hath wrought in our Hearts any holy Qualifications: But *Aſſurance* comes *only* by an inward *Voice* of the Spirit, ſaying, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*, and our believing *thereupon* that our Sins are forgiven.

Truth 16. THE Sins of Believers have the *loathſomeneſs* of Sin adhering to them, which God *ſeeth*, and accounteth the *Committers* guilty thereby: And they ought to charge *themſelves* therewith, ſo as to ſtir up themſelves to Repentance, and renew their actings of Faith on Chriſt for Forgiveneſs. Nevertheleſs, they ought not thereby to fear their being *out of a juſtified State*, further than their Falls give them *juſt cauſe* of ſuſpecting, that *Sin hath dominion* over them, and that their *firſt* believing on Chriſt was *not ſincere*.

Error. GOD *ſeeth no Sin* in Believers, tho' he ſee the *Fact*; neither doth *he* charge them with any Sin; nor ought they to charge *themſelves* with any Sin, nor be at all ſad for them; nor confeſs, repent, or do any thing, as a *means* of their Pardon;

don; no, nor in order to *assuring* themselves of Pardon, even when they commit Murther, Adultery, or the *grossest* Wickedness. CHAP. I.

Truth 17. IT is true of *Believers*, that if Sin should have *dominion over them*, they would thereby be subject to Condemnation: And tho' the Grace of God will *prevent* the dominion of Sin in every elect Believer, and so keep them from *eternal* Death; yet true Believers may by Sin bring *great hurt* upon themselves in Soul and Body, which they ought to *fear*; and they may expect a share in *national Judgments*, according as they have contributed to common Guilt.

Error. THE *grossest* Sins that Believers can commit, cannot do them the *least harm*; neither ought they to *fear* the least hurt by their own Sins, nor by *national Sins*; yea, tho' themselves have had a hand therein.

Truth 18. THO' God is not so *angry* with his people for their Sins, as to cast them out of his *Covenant-favour*; yet by their Sins he is so *displeased*, as for them to *correct* his Children, tho' he speaks *Instructions* by his Rebukes.

Error. NONE of the Afflictions of Believers have in them the least of God's *Displeasure* against their persons for their Sins.

CHAP. I.

Truth 19. THO' the preſent ſincere *Holineſs* of Believers be not *perfect*, according to the *Precepts* of the Word; nor *valuable* by the *Sanction* of the Law of Innocency; nor any *Atonement* for our defects; and we *ſtill need* forgiveneſs, and the Merits of Chriſt, for *Acceptance* thereof: Yet as far as it prevails, it's lovely in itſelf, and pleaſing to God, and is not *Dung* or *Filth*.

Error. THE *greateſt Holineſs* in Believers, tho' wrought in them by the *Holy Ghoſt*, is mere *Dung*, Rottenneſs, and Filthineſs, as *in them*.

Truth 20. GOSPEL-PREACHING is, when the Meſſengers of Chriſt do publiſh to fallen Sinners the good news of Salvation by Chriſt, to be *obtained* in the way which he hath appointed in his Word; *freely* offering Salvation on his Terms; earneſtly perſuading and commanding men in the name of Chriſt, to comply with thoſe Terms, as ever they would eſcape the Miſery they are under, and poſſeſs the Benefits he hath purchaſed; directing all to look to him for *Strength*, and to acknowledge him as the only Mediator, and his Obedience and Sufferings as the *ſole Atonement* for Sin, and *meriting Cauſe* of all Bleſſings; inſtructing them in all revealed Truth, and by Goſpel-motives urging them to obey the whole Will of God,

God, as a Rule of Duty, but especially to be sincere and upright, pressing after Perfection. CHAP. I.

Error. GOSPEL-PREACHING is, to teach men, they were *as much* pardoned, and as acceptable to God always, as when they are regenerate; and while they were ungodly, they had *the same Interest* in God and Christ as when they believe; neither can Sin any way hinder their Salvation, or their Peace; nor have they any thing to do to further either of them, Christ having done all for them, and given himself to them, *before* any holy qualification or endeavour.

Truth 21. LEGAL PREACHING is, to preach the Law as a Covenant of innocency, or *of works*; or to preach the *Mosaick* or *Jewish* Covenant of peculiarity: But it is not *Legal Preaching*, to require and persuade to faith, holiness, or duties, by Promises and Threatnings, according to the *Grace of the Gospel*, and to direct Men to *fear and hope* accordingly.

Error. LEGAL PREACHING is, to call People to act any Grace, or do any Duty, as a required *means* of Salvation or inward Peace; or to *threaten* them with Death or any Affliction, to cause *Fear*, if they commit the grossest Sins, and backslide, and fall away; or to *promise* them any Blessing upon their Obedience to the Com-

Commandments of Chriſt; or to urge the *Threatnings*, to perſuade Sinners to believe and repent.

CHAP. II.

A Renunciation of ſundry Errors, Anno 1694. *A Paper called*, The third Paper, 1696. *A Propoſal made by us*, 1697.

CHAP. II. ALTHO' we hoped the Caution uſed in the foreſaid *State of Truth and Error*, would prevent the Imputation of *Socinianiſm*, and other hurtful Errors; yet finding our Brethren diſſatisfied, we ſubſcribed with them, *Anno* 1692. (about ſeven Months after the *State of Truth* was publiſhed,) certain Doctrinal Propoſitions collected out of the *Aſſembly*'s *Confeſſion*; which we printed in 1693. with this Title, *An Agreement in Doctrinals*, &c. But that being too long to be here inſerted, we ſhall confine ourſelves to the more material Parts of what further Account we have given of our Judgment concerning the Doctrines of *Satisfaction* and *Juſtification*; which may be ſeen at large

large in our *Anſwer to the Report*, pag. 330, 336, 359, *&c. ſeq.* CHAP. II.

IN a Paper ſent to our *Congregational* Brethren, *Anno* 1694. it is thus declared:

" WE the *united Miniſters* in and about *London*, do renounce and teſtify againſt theſe following Opinions.

" 1. THAT there is no definite " number of Perſons *elected* from all Eternity, whom God will by his appointed means *certainly* ſave, and bring " to eternal Life; leaving the reſt, who " fall under a juſt Condemnation for their " original and actual Sins, eſpecially for " their neglect and contempt of the means " of Salvation.

" 2. THAT Chriſt died *equally* for all " Men, not intending the final Salvation " of ſome more than others.

" 3. THAT Men have in their own " Power, by the uſe of the natural faculties of their Reaſon and Will, *unaſſiſted* by the ſpecial Light and Grace of " the Holy Ghoſt, to perform all that is " neceſſary to Salvation; or that his ſpecial efficacious Light and Grace is not " neceſſary to their converſion, perſeverance, and final ſalvation.

" 4. THAT any of them whom God " hath foreknown, predeſtinated, and called effectually according to the purpoſe

" of

CHAP. II. " of his Grace, ſhall fall away, either " totally, or ſo as not to be finally glo- " rified.

" 5. THAT Faith, Repentance, a " holy Converſation, or any Act or Work " whatever done by us, or wrought by " the Spirit of God in us, are any Part " of that Righteouſneſs, for the ſake of " which, or on the account whereof, " God doth juſtify any man, or entitle " him to eternal Life."

THEN follows a Teſtimony againſt the other Extreams, *viz. Antinomian Errors.*

AGAIN, *Anno* 1696. in a Paper (call'd *The third Paper*,) ſent to our Brethren, we thus give our ſenſe.

" I. CONCERNING *Juſtification.* That " altho' the expreſs Word of God do aſ- " ſert the neceſſity of *Regeneration*, to our " entring into the Kingdom of God; " and requires *Repentance*, that our Sins " may be blotted out; and *Faith in* " *Chriſt*, that we may be juſtified; and " *Holineſs* of heart and life, without " which we cannot ſee God: Yet that " *none of theſe*, or any Work done by " Men, or wrought by the Spirit of God " in them, is, under any denomination " whatſoever *, *any part of the Righte-* " *ouſneſs*,

* Note, *It was declared, that by the words* [under any denomination whatſoever,] *we exclude* all Righteouſ- neſs

" *ouſneſs*, for the ſake, or on the account CHAP.
" whereof, God doth pardon, juſtify, or II.
" accept Sinners, or entitle them to eter-
" nal Life, that being only *the Righte-*
" *ouſneſs of Chriſt* without them, imputed
" to them, and received by Faith alone.

" II. OF *a Commutation of Perſons* be-
" tween Chriſt and us. As we are to
" conſider our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his
" obedience and ſufferings, as God and
" Man inveſted with the office of Media-
" tor; ſo it is apparent, this *Commutation*
" *of Perſons* with us was not *natural*, in
" reſpect of either Nature, by which his
" individual Subſtance ſhould become ours,
" and ours his; nor *moral*, in reſpect of
" qualities or actions, whereby he ſhould
" become inherently ſinful, and we im-
" mediately ſinleſs; nor was it any change,
" whereby his office of Mediator ſhould
" be transferred on us: But it is to be
" underſtood in a *legal*, or *judicial* Senſe,
" (as we may call it,) *viz.* He by agree-
" ment between the Father and him, *came*
" *into our room and ſtead*, not to repent
" and believe for us, which the Goſpel
" requires of us as our Duty, (tho' he
" hath undertaken the Elect ſhall in due
" time be enabled thereto;) but to an-
" ſwer

neſs *from being* meritorious, *or* atoning, *yea, or a procuring cauſe of theſe benefits; none is at all ſo, but the* Righteouſneſs of Chriſt: *But we intended not to exclude, what the Goſpel requireth in order to our intereſt in theſe benefits, given for the ſake of* Chriſt's Righteouſneſs.

CHAP. II. " swer for our violation of the Law of " works: *He being made Sin for us, who* " *knew no Sin, that we might be made the* " *Righteousness of God in him.* 2 Cor. " v. 21.

" III. OF God's being *pleased* or *dis-* " *pleased with Christ*, as standing and suf- " fering in our stead. We judge that " God was *always pleased* with Christ, both " in his Person, and in the Execution of all " his Offices, (which is expressed most " particularly in that of his Priestly, *John* " x. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love* " *me, because I lay down my Life*, &c.) and " was no otherwise *displeased*, than as having " a dispassionate Will to inflict upon him " the Punishment of our Sins, which he " had undertaken to bear, that God might " without Injury to his Justice or Honour, " pardon and save penitent Believers for " his Satisfaction, and Intercession found- " ed thereon."

WE also, in 1697, delivered our Judgment in this *Proposal* to our Brethren.

" (1.) THAT *Repentance towards God* " is commanded, in order to Remission " of Sin. (2.) That *Faith in Christ* is " commanded by the Gospel, in order to " the Justification of our persons before " God, for the sake of the alone Righ- " teousness of Christ: (3.) That the " Word of God requires *Perseverance* in " true

" true Faith and Holineſs, that we may CHAP.
" be partakers of the heavenly Glory. II.
" (4.) That the Goſpel promiſeth Pardon
" through the blood of Chriſt to the *Pe-*
" *nitent*, Juſtification before God to the
" *Believer*, and the heavenly Glory to
" ſuch as *perſevere* in Faith and Holineſs;
" and alſo declareth, that God will not
" pardon the Impenitent, juſtify the Un-
" believer, nor glorify the Apoſtate or
" Unholy. (5.) That *juſtifying Faith* is
" not only a perſuaſion of the underſtand-
" ing, but alſo a receiving and reſting
" upon Chriſt alone for Salvation. (6.)
" That by *Change of Perſon* is meant,
" that whereas we were condemned for
" our Sins, the Lord Jeſus was *ſubſtituted in*
" *our room*, to bear the *Puniſhment* of our
" Sins, for the *Satisfaction* of divine Juſ-
" tice, *that whoever believes on him, may be*
" *acquitted and ſaved:* But it is not in-
" tended, that the *Filth of Sin* was upon
" Chriſt, nor that he was a *Criminal* in
" God's account. (7.) That by Chriſt be-
" ing *our Surety* is meant, that Jeſus Chriſt
" our Mediator obliged himſelf to ex-
" piate our Sins by his blood, and to pur-
" chaſe eternal Life for all that believe,
" and Faith and every ſaving Grace for
" the Elect: But it is not intended,
" that we were legally reputed to make
" Satisfaction, or to purchaſe eternal Life.
" (8.) That by Chriſt's *anſwering for us*
" *the*

CHAP. II.

" *the Obligations of the violated Law of*
" *works* is intended, that whereas the
" Law obliged us to die for our Sins,
" Chriſt became obliged to *die in our*
" *ſtead*; and whereas we were, after
" we had ſinned, ſtill obliged to yield
" perfect obedience, Chriſt perfectly *obeyed*
" *the Law*, that upon the account of his
" *active* and *paſſive obedience* Believers
" might be forgiven, and entitled to eter-
" nal Life: But it is not intended, that
" the Senſe of the Law of works ſhould
" be, that if *we or Chriſt obey'd* we ſhould
" live, and if *Chriſt ſuffered* we ſhould not
" die, *tho' we ſinned*; nor that Believers
" are *juſtified*, or to be *judged* by the *Law*
" *of works*, but by the Goſpel; altho'
" the Righteouſneſs for the ſake of which
" they are juſtified, be as perfect as that
" Law of works required, and far more
" valuable."

CHAP. III.

The State of Truth and Error, published in the Congregational Ministers Declaration *against* Antinomian Errors, *about* December, 1698.

Error 1. THAT the eternal Decree gives such an existence to the Justification of the Elect, as makes their *State* whilst in unbelief, to be *the same* as when they do believe, in all respects save only as to the *Manifestation*; and that there is no other Justification by Faith, but what is in their *Consciences.* CHAP. III.

Truth. THAT there is a *difference* between the *State* of the Elect, whilst in unbelief, and when believers, besides what is *manifestative* to their Consciences. *Declar. pag.* 12.

Error 2. THAT the Elect, considered as in their *natural State*, or as in the *first Adam*, are not under the denunciation of *Wrath* by the Law, as well as other unbelieving and impenitent Sinners.

Truth. THAT the Elect, before they

CHAP. III. believe, are not *perſonally* and *actually* juſtified in the Court of Heaven; *pag.* 13. and none may expect to be pardoned in a ſtate of Unbelief and Impenitence. *Pag* 47.

Error 3. THAT pardoned Sin is *no Sin*; and therefore God *cannot ſee Sin* in his People, to be *diſpleaſed* with them for their Sins; nor doth God expreſs his *fatherly diſpleaſure* againſt them by any Afflictions laid upon them.

Truth. THAT pardoned, yea mortified Sins, are truly and properly *Sins*; and God *ſeeth the Sins of* his own People, and is *diſpleaſed* with them *for* their Sins. *Pag.* 18, 19.

Error 4. THAT Believers are not bound to *confeſs* or mourn over Sin, as committed by them; or to *pray for Pardon of Sin*, in making a daily acknowledgment of a need of it, becauſe it was pardoned *before committed*; and pardoned Sin is no Sin.

Truth. THAT when Believers do ſin, it is their Duty to humble themſelves, to confeſs their Sins, and pray for Pardon. *Pag.* 19.

Error 5. THAT Believers ought not to be *afraid* of committing Sin, becauſe their Sins can *do them no hurt.*

Truth. THE Sins of Believers *do hurt them,*

them, and they should be *afraid* to commit them; seeing they impair their Graces and Comforts, harden their Hearts, wound their Consciences, hurt and scandalize others, grieve God's holy Spirit, expose to his *fatherly displeasure*, and bring temporal Judgments upon them. *Pag.* 22. CHAP. III.

Error 6. THAT they must do no good Work or Duty *for their own Benefit*, or with an Eye to their own Salvation.

Truth. THAT Believers must do good Works, *expecting Blessings* in the performance thereof. *Pag.* 24.

Error 7. THAT Believers not having in themselves an Ability to do good Works, *are not bound* to perform *any good Duty*, unless excited thereunto by a special motion of the Spirit.

Truth. THO' Believers Ability to do good Works is not at all in themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ, yet are they not hereupon to *grow negligent*, as if they *were not bound* to perform any Duty, unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they *ought to be diligent* in stirring up the Grace of God that is in them. *Pag.* 27.

Error 8. THAT *Sanctification*, evidenced by the Spirit of God to their Consciences, *is not a Sign*, Mark, or Evidence *of their Justification*; and that *Marks* and *Signs*

CHAP. III. for the trial of a Believer's Faith *are of no use*; for Faith lying in a full *persuasion* and *assurance* that their Persons were *actually justified* and pardoned in Christ, it is a Sin to *question*, Whether they do savingly believe, or no?

Truth. SAVING Faith lieth not in a full *persuasion* and *assurance* that our Sins are actually pardoned; but *Marks* and *Signs* for the trial of our spiritual Estate *are useful*, and to be sought after; and *Sanctification*, evidenced by the Spirit of God to our Consciences, is a certain *Sign* and Mark of our Justification. *Pag.* 27, 28.

Error 9. THAT Gospel-Ministers are *not to preach the Law* in its Commands and Curses, to convince Men of their need of Christ; nor are Believers obliged to regard *the Law* as delivered by *Moses*, nor as externally propounded; nor are they bound, when they commit Sin, to look to *the Law* for further discoveries and convictions of the remaining Corruptions that are in them, because by the Gospel its Obligations are dissolved.

Truth. THAT *the Law* delivered by *Moses* continues in its Commands and Curses *undissolved*; and it's still of Use to *convince of Sin*, that we may see a need of Christ; and therefore it is to be preached and externally propounded, and we are to look unto it: *Pag.* 36. And tho' there is no

no Sin *so small* but it deserves Damnation, yet there is no Sin *so great* that it shall bring Damnation to them that *truly repent*; which makes the constant *preaching of Repentance* necessary. *Pag.* 39. CHAP. III.

Error 10. THAT Ministers of the Gospel ought not to propound the *Offers of Salvation*, unto all those to whom God calls them to preach; seriously inviting them to improve the Means of Grace, that they may be saved; and assuring them in the way of their ministerial duty, of the Salvation of all such as believe in Christ; because they want Ability to close with the Offer, and all shall not be saved.

Truth. THAT tho' men want Ability to believe savingly, yet it's the Duty of Gospel Ministers to *make the Offer*, and to testify to them, *that whoever believes and repents shall be saved*; and that it's the People's Duty, to make use of their natural Faculties, with such external Means and workings of the Spirit, as God affords them, that they may believe, repent, and be saved. *Pag.* 41, 42.

Error 11. THAT by God's *laying our Sins upon Christ*, he became every way *as sinful as we*, and we every way *as righteous as he*; and that therefore persons may expect to be pardoned, whilst they continue in a state of Unbelief and Impeni-

CHAP. III. tence; and that continued *Repentance* and *Holineſs* are not in the nature of the thing, nor by the conſtitution of the Goſpel, *neceſſary* to our being poſſeſſed of eternal Life.

Truth. OUR Sins were not *laid upon Chriſt*, ſo as to make him every way *as ſinful as we*, and we are not every way *as righteous as Chriſt*; and none may expect to be pardoned in a ſtate of Unbelief and Impenitence; and continued *Repentance* and *Holineſs* are *neceſſary* to our poſſeſſion of eternal Life. *Pag.* 46, 47.

CHAP. IV.

It is made evident, that this Declaration of our Brethren, *taken altogether, and examined with due Charity and Candour, ought to be acknowledged* a ſufficient Vindication *of the Approvers thereof from all hurtful* Antinomian *Errors.*

CHAP. IV. TO this end, I. We think that Chriſtian Charity and Candour oblige us, to judge of what they have declared by theſe

these following *Rules*; and we expect the same for our selves from them. (1.) That the omission of any *Points unmentioned*, is not to be attributed to a mistaken Judgment concerning them; and far less, when the things expressed are granted to be *Truths* or *Errors* upon a reason that alike infers what is omitted. (2.) That the Approvers do *truly intend* for substance what is declared. (3.) That in a Body of *Subscribers*, some few may be *more narrow* in their conceptions; and therefore, to avoid a Breach, must be accommodated in the *phrasing of some Points*, beyond what the others, if at full liberty, would either need or chuse. (4.) If any thing be *a little darkly* or suspiciously worded in one part, and *more expressly* and fully in another, the *latter* must be the Index of their Judgment; upon which account we cite not only their *State of Error and Truth*, but refer to the *Pages* containing their *Explications* and approved *Authorities*, some of which will be mentioned afterwards. (5.) That they ought not to be charged with the *Consequences* of any occasional Passages, which they disown. CHAP. IV.

II. THESE *just Rules* being admitted, we shall enumerate the *hurtful Antinomian Errors*, as *Antinomianism* is described in the last Age, (which in many things differs from what was so called at first,) and under each refer you to the places, (besides

CHAP. IV. the abovementioned *State of Error and Truth,*) wherein the Brethren have so laudably vindicated themselves by their *Declaration.*

THE dangerous Parts of *Antinomianism* are reducible to these general Heads. [1.] As it renders the *Ministry* unapt to its proper Ends. [2.] As it tends to *Libertinism* in Practice. [3.] As it hinders a well-grounded *Assurance*, and encourageth *Presumption.* And, [4.] As it reproacheth *Christ* our blessed Redeemer. Against each of which our Brethren bear their Testimony.

[1.] THE hurtful *Antinomian Errors*, which render the *Ministry* unapt to its proper Ends, are, (1.) Unduly limiting the *Offers of Salvation*, and decrying Arguments to excite Sinners to *use their Endeavours* under the assistance of Gospel-Means and common Grace. Against this see *Error* 10. and from *pag.* 41, to 46. (2.) Forbidding and branding as *legal*, the *preaching* of Duties and Threatnings, and the applying of promised Benefits as Motives to Faith and other Duties, whereto those Benefits are promised. Against which see *Error* 9. and *pag.* 36, 39. *Error* 6. and *pag.* 25, 26, 45. (3.) Denying that the Elect whilst *unconverted*, are under the Curse of the Law; and affirming they are united to Christ, and *justified before God*, and pardoned, whilst impenitent

impenitent Infidels. Againſt which ſee *Errors* 1, 2, 11. and *pag.* 12, to 18. and 47, 58. CHAP. IV.

[2.] THE hurtful *Antinomian Errors* tending to *Libertiniſm* in Practice, beſides the Impediments to a Sinner's conviction and converſion under the fore-mentioned Head of the *Miniſtry*, are ſuch as theſe: (1.) That *God ſeeth no Sin in his People*, accounts them *not their Sins* but Chriſt's, and is *not diſpleaſed* with his People, nor afflicts them *for* their Sins. Againſt which ſee *Error* 3. and *pag.* 19. (2.) That *Repentance is not neceſſary* to Forgiveneſs; nor are Believers to mourn for Sin, or to *beg Pardon*, nor to confeſs it, unleſs it be to ſhew, for Chriſt's glory, how many the Sins are which are become his. Againſt which ſee *Error* 4. and *pag.* 19, 20, 21, 47, 58. (3.) That *their Sins* can do Believers *no hurt*. Againſt this ſee *Error* 5. *pag.* 22. 23. (4.) That we ought not to *intend our own Benefit* by our Duties, neither are bound to perform Duties unleſs *excited* thereto by the Spirit, nor are any Acts of our Obedience *rewardable*; and that continued *Repentance* and *Holineſs* are not by the conſtitution of the Goſpel *neceſſary* to our being poſſeſſed of eternal Life. Againſt this ſee *Errors* 6, 10, 11. and *pag.* 25, 26, 27, 47, 58, 59. (5.) That *juſtifying Faith* is a *Perſuaſion*, that Chriſt is mine, and that my Sins are pardoned

CHAP. IV.

doned in Christ. Against this see *Error* 8. and *pag.* 30, 31.

[3.] THE hurtful *Antinomian Error* which hinders a well-grounded *Assurance* and Peace, and also encourages *Presumption*, is, that besides the last description of *Faith*, we are *not to try our State* by marks and signs of Sanctification. Against this see *Error* 8. and *pag.* 32, 33, 34.

[4.] THE hurtful *Antinomian Errors* reproachful to *Christ* our Redeemer, are such as these; that Christ is *as sinful as we*, and we are *as righteous as Christ*. Against which see *Error* 11. and *pag.* 48, 57.

IF the Reader consult these places, and compare them with our *State of Truth and Error* in the *first Chapter*, he cannot but rejoice in our Brethrens Agreement with us in a Testimony against *Antinomianism*.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

SOCINIAN Errors concerning Chriſt's Satisfaction: *Alſo* Limborch's, *with ſome other* Arminians, *concerning Chriſt's* Satisfaction. *SOCINIAN Errors as to* Juſtification: Limborch's, *with ſome other* Arminian *Errors, about* Juſtification. *With a State of* Truths *oppoſite to each of theſe, as alſo to* Popiſh *Errors.*

FINDING our Brethren ſuggeſt in the Preface to this *Declaration*, that after all we have ſaid, (in *Chap.* 1, and 2.) yet ſtill we ought to do more to *diſcharge* ourſelves from *hurtful Errors* about Chriſt's *Satisfaction*, and our *Juſtification*; we ſhall, to promote Peace, renounce ſeveral more *Errors* about thoſe two Doctrines wherein we are ſuſpected, and tell them what we think to be *Truths*. CHAP. V.

Error

CHAP. V.

Error 1. PUNITIVE Juſtice againſt Sin is no property of God, but only an effect of his Will, and therefore there was *no need* of any *Satisfaction* to be made by Chriſt for Sin; nor is it leſs than ridiculous to ſay, God was at once *juſt* as well as *merciful* in bringing about our Salvation by Chriſt. Socin. *Opera Theol. tom.* i. *Prælect. cap.* 16. *& tom.* ii. *de Servator. par.* 1. *cap.* 1. *Prælect. cap.* 16. Woltzog. *in Mat.* xix. 28. Crell. *Reſp. ad Grot. cap.* 1.

Truth. GOD is eſſentially *juſt*, and ſo zealous for the Honour of his *Law* when enacted, and his *Government*, that Sin muſt not go unpuniſhed; and therefore if Sinners be ſaved from the Puniſhments threatned by the violated Law for Chriſt their Mediator's ſake, it was *neceſſary* that he made *Satisfaction* to Punitive Juſtice by enduring the penal effects of God's wrath.

Error 2. JESUS CHRIST is not the true eternal *moſt High God*, of the ſame ſubſtance, authority and power with the Father. Socin. *tom.* ii. *Reſponſ. ad Jac. Vujeki, cap.* 1, *&c.*

Truth. JESUS CHRIST is the true eternal *moſt High God*, of the ſame ſubſtance, authority and power with the Father; and in time aſſumed the Human Nature,

Nature, and remaineth God-Man for evermore. CHAP. V.

Note, THIS Article is inserted, because the *Value* of Christ's obedience and death, for *Satisfaction* and *Merit*, was derived from the Dignity of Christ's Person as God: And therefore tho' the *Socinians* faintly argue, that if Christ were the eternal God, it would not render his death a Satisfaction; yet it's evident, their great concern in denying Christ's Satisfaction is to prevent the unanswerable Argument this would be for his Deity. The like is also to be seen by their notion of the *Lord's-Supper*.

Error 3. CHRIST did not by his blood acquire or purchase the Gospel-Covenant, nor was his death an impulsive Cause of God's promising to men the blessings of that Covenant; nor did it move him to make such Promises: But Christ was only the *Mediator*, that is, the *Sponsor* of it, who assured men that God would accomplish it, and who in God's name, and by his command, performed such things as belonged to the confirming and executing of the said Covenant. Socin. *tom.* ii. *pag.* 168, 199. Crell. *vol.* i. *pag.* 612. & *vol.* iii. *Resp. ad Grot. pag.* 19, 128, 171.

Truth. CHRIST did not only *confirm* the Gospel-Covenant to men, and do such things

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things as belonged to the execution of the Gospel-Promises; but God as Governor made those Promises *in consideration of the death of Christ*, as what vindicated the Glory of his Government in offering and promising such blessings to condemned Sinners; altho' as our absolute Lord and Proprietor he freely purposed within himself, that those blessings should be granted in what method he judged fit.

Error 4. CHRIST was for no other cause *a Mediator*, nor so called, but that he was appointed by God *a middle Person* between himself and men; not that he should *appease* God towards men, but that he should declare God *already pacified* to them, and most evidently confirm the same by himself: And as for men who were haters of and enemies to God, them he was to *reconcile* to God, (that is, to convert them,) and be their eternal Lawgiver, and faithful Interpreter of the divine Will to them, by whom they might always have access to God, and obtain eternal Life. Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 788.

Truth. JESUS CHRIST was by divine adjustment *a middle Person* between God and Sinners, and as such *laid his hand on both*; undertaking to *appease* God's wrath, and procure Salvation for us at his hand; and also to make God and the way of Salvation known to us, for our Reconciliation

tion and Obedience to God: And by him God ſtill imparts his bleſſings to us, and admits us to a free acceſs to himſelf. CHAP. V.

Error 5. CHRIST is called *a Surety*, as a Sponſor or Meſſenger on God's part to us; but he promiſed nothing to God for us. Crell. *vol.* i. *pag.* 612.

Truth. THO' Chriſt was not a joint federating Party with us in the *Covenant of works*, yet he was not only *a Surety* on God's part to us, but he was a mediating *Surety* on both parts; and as ſuch, he engaged in the *Covenant of Redemption* to make Atonement for us, and in the *Goſpel-Covenant*, that all true Believers ſhall perſevere to the obtaining of eternal Life.

Error 6. CHRIST was not an *High-Prieſt* while *on Earth*, nor was his Blood offered by him to God; but it was *himſelf* was offered, and that not on the Croſs, but when he entered into Heaven: Yet the death of Chriſt ſo far belongs to his Prieſthood, that he was prepared by his death to become a High-Prieſt, and to offer himſelf a perfect Sacrifice for Sin in Heaven; neither of which could be, according to the Decree of God, if his death had not intervened. Crell. *vol.* iii. *Reſp. ad Grot. cap.* 10. *vol.* i. *pag.* 613. *& vol.* ii. *par.* 1. *pag.* 162. Socin. *tom.* i. *Prælect. Theol. cap.* 23.

Truth.

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Truth. CHRIST was an *High-Prieſt* while he was *on Earth*, and as ſuch upon the Croſs offered up himſelf by his bloody death a perfect Sacrifice, whereby his Blood was a propitiatory Offering at the very time it was ſhed; and tho' in the virtue thereof the Saints were ſaved before his Incarnation, and Chriſt for ever intercedeth in Heaven, yet the preſenting of himſelf or it there, makes no addition to the Perfection of it as a Sacrifice.

Error 7. THERE is no uſe nor place in the *Prieſthood* of Chriſt, for appeaſing God's wrath, or offering any Sacrifice, no not in Heaven, as a condition of obtaining Remiſſion properly as from God, or impetrating the ſame: But Chriſt's death is a means of our enjoying that Remiſſion from God, and it was indirectly a condition thereof as to be given to us; that is, it was a condition impoſed on Chriſt, without which, by the divine Decree, he was not to obtain Authority from God to forgive us our Sins; and it may be called a Sacrifice to God's mercy, as of his own free Grace reconciled, but not as offended with Sinners. Socin. *tom.* ii. *pag.* 665, 666. Crell. *vol.* i. *pag.* 612. Woltzog. *in Joh.* iii. 16.

Truth. THE firſt and principal uſe of Chriſt's *Prieſthood*, was to offer on the Croſs a Sacrifice to appeaſe God's wrath againſt

against Sinners, and to impetrate Remission and eternal Life; that so God the offended Governor might, consistently with the honour of his Law, and of all his divine Perfections, be at liberty, and inclined, as well to give the said Blessings, as that we might become actual Partakers of them from Christ, as authorized to apply them to us: And all the other *Sacerdotal* Acts of Christ do refer to this. CHAP. V.

Error 8. REDEMPTION mentioned in the New Testament, signifies no more nor other, than a freeing us from the Punishment of Sin without any proper Price intervening: And when it's said, *Redemption* is obtained *by the blood of Christ*, it is not meant, that the blood of Christ could move God, or that God was thereby obliged to grant us deliverance from the Punishment of our Sins; but that the shedding of his blood ought to intervene, that we might be moved thereby to accept that deliverance when offered to us. Neither did Christ *buy us*, but God by Christ asserted his Right to us; and tho' our deliverance from Punishment is gotten as if *by a Price*, yet this is not as if the blood of Christ were paid to any. Socin. *tom.* i. *Prælect. Theol. cap.* 19. *& tom.* ii. *pag.* 145, 147. Slichting. *in Rom.* v. 10.

Truth. REDEMPTION *by the blood of Christ*, is, that we are bought by his blood

CHAP. V. as a proper Price, and delivered from the curse of the Law, and captivity under Sin and Satan, as by a proper Ransom paid to the just Governor of the world.

Error 9. CHRIST by his death did not *reconcile God* to us, but he *reconcileth us* to God by his death, that is, we come thereby to be converted to God, and cease to offend him; yea, God's anger was so far from being appeased by the death of Christ, that thereby it was declared, that God was before pacified to us. Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 144, 145, 665, 666. Crell. *vol.* iii. *Resp. ad Grot. pag.* 154, 155. Slichting. *tom.* ii. *pag.* 214, 401. *& in Rom.* v. 10. *& 2 Cor.* v. 18.

Truth. WE being Children of wrath because of our Sin, the Lord Jesus did by his death atone our offended God, who became thereby *so reconciled*, that he offereth Peace to Sinners, and requireth and urgeth us by believing aright to accept thereof; and upon our penitent believing he becomes *actually reconciled* to us, delighting in us, and dealing with us as Objects of his restored Favour.

NOTE, [1] Crellius, *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 8. *part.* 3. disputes against this, as the Error of *Grotius* and the rest of the Orthodox, stating it in these words; "God "was *before* angry, but being *appeased* by "the death of Christ he *determined* to lay "aside

" aside his Anger; and upon our believ- CHAP.
" ing and repenting he doth *actually* lay V.
" aside his Anger."

[2.] Grotius, *de Satisf. cap.* 7. distinguisheth the actings of the divine Will; as, (1.) *Before* Christ's death is decreed, *&c.* then God is *angry* with the Sinner, yet so as not to be averse to all methods of Reconciliation. (2.) *Upon* Christ's death, (as well when fixed, as when undergone,) then God not only appoints the way, but *promiseth* to be reconciled. (3.) *When* a man *believes* in Christ with a right Faith, and Christ according to the tenor of the Covenant presents the believer to God; then God lays aside his Anger, and receives the person into Favour, (or is *actually* reconciled.)

[3.] How little do well-meaning *Antinomians* consider, that not only in the *third Error*, &c. but in this *last Error*, they agree with the *Socinians?* and that in a Point, whence *most* of their false notions about Christ's *Satisfaction* proceed. For, see you not? they hold, that after God's absolute Decree to justify us, there is no wrath in God to appease, the change is only *on our part*; and no Reconciliation but *on our side*, whom God begs to be reconciled to him, he being *already* at Peace with us.

Error 10. By Christ's *dying for our Sins* as being *laid on him*, is not meant,

CHAP. V. that Christ according to his Sponsion *satisfied Divine Justice* for our Sins, or that he paid to God any thing which we owed for our Sins: But when he is said to have *died for our Sins* as they were laid on him, nothing else is meant, but that he died by *occasion* of our Sins, *to take them away*; that is, he died to *reclaim* us from our Sins, and to *assure* us, that if we did leave our Sins we should be forgiven; and besides this, that we might *perceive* and *obtain* the fruit of that Forgiveness, *&c.* Socin. *tom.* ii. *pag.* 153. *&* *tom.* i. *Prælect. Theol. cap.* 18, 20. Crell. *vol.* iii. *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 9.

Truth. WHEN it's said, *Christ died for our Sins* as being *laid on him*, it's not only to bring about the forementioned Ends, and such other Purposes as are assigned by the *Socinians*; but they were *imputed to him* as what he had for our Salvation engaged to make Satisfaction for; and he did by his death make a real, full, and proper *Satisfaction* to God's Justice, vindicating the honour of his Justice and Government, and of the violated Law as fully, as if the pardoned Sinner had endured the utmost Punishment threatned by the said Law.

Error 11. GOD did not inflict death on Christ our Mediator to express his *hatred of Sin*, and to deter us from it by his death

death as any instance of divine Displeasure against our Offences; and therefore our Sins were *not punished* in Christ. Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 577, 578, 581. *& tom.* ii. *pag.* 194. Crell. *vol.* i. *de morte Christi, pag.* 611. CHAP. V.

Truth. GOD did *punish our Sins* in the death of Christ, by shewing his real *hatred against Sin* in all the extremities Christ did endure; which extremities and death thus inflicted, were not only fit, but truly design'd, to deter us from all Disobedience, against which God thus testified his high Displeasure.

Error 12. CHRIST did not by his death properly *merit Salvation* or any other thing for us, nor did he by the Merit of his great Obedience *appease* God's Anger. Socin. *tom.* ii. *de Servat. part.* 3. *cap.* 6. *pag.* 205. Ruari *Epist.* 164. Smal. *Disp.* 2. *contr. Frantz.*

Truth. CHRIST by his death and obedience did properly *merit our Salvation*, and the Reconciliation of God to us; his death being to be considered, first as satisfactory, and then meritorious; and his obedience, first as meritorious, and then satisfactory.

Error 13. BY Christ's *dying for us*, or *in our stead*, (as some of them sometimes word it, tho' they expressly dispute

CHAP. V. againſt it,) is not meant, that Chriſt was ſubſtituted to die in the room of us who were condemned to die, that God might be pacified; nor that his death was inſtead of our death, that we for the Merit of it might be delivered: But the meaning is, that Chriſt *for our good* did by his death come to be crowned with Glory and Power, whereby he is able to make us meet for Pardon, and is authorized to give that Pardon to us. Socin. *Prælect. cap.* 20, 21. *& de Servat. cap.* 8. Crell. *Reſp. ad Grot. cap.* 9. *par.* 1, *&c.*

Truth. By Chriſt's *dying for us*, and *in our ſtead*, is meant, that whereas we Sinners were condemned to die for our Sins, our Lord Jeſus, tho' he became not a Sinner in our ſtead, yet as Mediator, he was ſubſtituted to die in our ſtead, that by his death God might be *inclined* to forgive us who otherwiſe muſt have died; (and by virtue of his death, as a *Satisfaction* to Divine Juſtice, we are delivered from Death.) This Parentheſis I add to the deſcription *Grotius* gives of Chriſt's dying in our ſtead: *De Satisf. cap.* 9.

Limborch's Opinion of *Chriſt's Satisfaction*, conſonant to *Epiſcopius* and ſome few other *Arminians*.

Error 14. Vindictive Juſtice *required not Satisfaction* to be made, in order to

to the remission of Sin. *Limbor. Theol. Christian. lib.* iii. *cap.* 18. § 4. CHAP. V.

Truth. VINDICTIVE Justice for the Honour of the divine Law *required Satisfaction* in order to the remission of Sin, at least after the enacting of *Adam*'s Covenant.

Error 15. CHRIST's Sufferings were *not a full Satisfaction* to Justice, nor was the Price of our Redemption *fully equivalent* to the misery we deserved: But God might accept as a redeeming Price *much* or *little* as himself judged fit, and might be satisfied with *any* sort of Affliction laid on Christ: Nor did Christ satisfy the rigor of divine Justice, but the Will of God, considered as at once *merciful* as well as *just*; (that is, Mercy *abated to Christ* in the terms of *Satisfaction*, what Justice demanded.) *Lib.* iii. *cap.* 2. §. 8, 9. *cap.* 22. §. 2. *cap.* 23. §. 6.

Truth. THO' the great Mercy of God appeared in his being willing to admit, accept, and provide Christ our Mediator to make Satisfaction for our Sins; yet God our just Governor would have it, that the terms of *Satisfaction* proposed to our Mediator should be such, as *strict Justice* demanded for the honour of his violated Law, and securing the ends of his Government; which terms were no lower, than that he should suffer what was *fully equi-*

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valent to the Punishments they whom he was to redeem deserved to endure: And as our Lord Jesus did suffer *in kind* much of what we deserved to suffer; so he suffered (considering the Dignity and Innocency of his Person,) what was in the intrinsick Value *fully equivalent* to such of our deserved Punishments, as he was not capable of suffering *in kind*. Nay, the Price of our Redemption paid by him, was not only *equivalent* to what the Law of Works required of us, but it was *supralegal*, that is, far exceeded what any Sinners were thereby obliged to; nor see we how *a full Satisfaction* for all our Sins could be otherwise made.

Error 16. OUR Faith and Regeneration were *not merited* by Christ. *Lib.* iii. *cap.* 22. §. 3.

Truth. CONSIDERING that our Newbirth and Faith are the fruits of the holy Spirit, whom by Sin we had expelled, his Return to regenerate and make us believers must be *for the sake* and with respect to the *Merits* of Christ, as what vindicated the honour of God who restored him to us.

Truth. No Penance, Pilgrimage, Fastings, or *good Works*, of our own, or other men, can make proper *Satisfaction* to divine Justice for the least of our Sins, as to any part of their Fault or Guilt.

THIS

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THIS laſt we add, in oppoſition to what *Popiſh* Opinions ſeem to militate againſt the Doctrine of Chriſt's Satisfaction.

SOCINIAN Notions of *Juſtification.*

Error 1. IN our *Juſtification by Chriſt* our Sins are blotted out, not by Chriſt's death and obedience as any Compenſation or *Satisfaction* to God for them, but only by God's ſimple Forgiveneſs and Pardon, abſolutely *free* in all reſpects, *without any Merit* of Chriſt's or our own. Socin. *tom.* i. *Prælect. Theol. cap.* 15, 16. Crell. *vol.* i. *in Phil.* iii. 9. *& in Rom.* iii. 24.

Truth. IN *Juſtification*, upon our penitent believing our Sins are pardoned, and our Perſons accepted *for the ſake* of Chriſt's death and obedience, as what compenſated and made *Satisfaction* for our Sins: And tho' neither our Graces nor Works do *merit* our Pardon, Acceptance, or eternal Life, yet theſe with all other ſaving Benefits were *merited* by Chriſt.

Note, THE *Socinians* are as much for abſolutely unlimited *free Grace*, as even our *Antinomians* would pretend to be, if not more.

Error 2. FAITH in Chriſt is accepted under the Goſpel as a perfect *Righteouſneſs*, for a perfect *ſinleſs Obedience*: And as this *Faith* expreſſeth it ſelf in *our Works*, our

CHAP. V. our Justification is in it self firmer and surer. Crell. *vol.* i. *pag.* 110, 612, 613, 474.

Truth 1. THO' true *Faith* be a *Gospel-Righteousness*, yet it is not accepted for *sinless Obedience*; nor doth the Gospel entitle us to Salvation upon our *believing*, as the Law entitled us to Life as *of Debt* for *our Obedience*, as the immediate *Merit* of that Reward by the adjustment of governing *Justice*; whereas the Gospel *of mere Grace* (tho' in a way of Government,) entitles the Believer to Life, as what was *merited* by the Lord Jesus, and not by our Faith or Works.

Truth. 2. THO' a dead Faith cannot justify us, and our believing Consent must be executed if we survive it; yet are we as truly and firmly *justified*, and in Christ's Right entitled to Glory, *when we first believe*, as when those genuine Fruits of it are produced, which are contrary to that Barrenness, Ungodliness, and Apostacy that would subject us to Condemnation.

WE shall also provide against *Limborch*'s and some other *Arminians* Notion of *Justification*; tho' it be none of the *five Points* which constitute *Arminianism*, and in the former Papers we have opposed each of the said Points, in concurrence with our *British Divines* in the Synod of *Dort*.

Error 3. BY Faith being *imputed for Righteousness*,

Righteousness, is meant, that God graciously for Christ's sake will *account our Obedience* which we yield him by Faith *as if it were perfect*, tho' it be imperfect: As if a Creditor having a Debtor who owes him 1000 *Gilders*, should upon this Debtor's paying him 100, forgive him the rest, and graciously impute to him this *part of payment* for the payment of the whole. *Lib.* vi. *cap.* 4. §. 39. CHAP. V.

Truth. THO' we are justified by *Christ believed on*, and Faith in him be accounted a *Gospel-Righteousness*, as it is the performed *Condition* upon which we are by the Gospel-Promise adjudged to have the Righteousness of Christ *imputed to us* as our pleadable Security against the curse of the Law; by which Righteousness of Christ alone, our Right to Pardon and eternal Life (wherein we are personally invested by the Gospel,) is merited, as well as the Blessings themselves: Nevertheless our Faith in Christ is *no part* of the *Debt* we owed to God by the Law of Innocency; nor is it, or our sincere Obedience proceeding from it, either in themselves, or by divine acceptance, *a full Conformity* to the Gospel-Precepts; much less doth God impute to us this Faith, or that Obedience, for the *payment* of the whole Debt owing by the Law or Gospel, tho' he grant us thereupon that Pardon, Favour, and Acceptance, Christ hath procured, so as to

deal

CHAP. V. deal with us as righteous Persons; and these he doth not suspend, until Faith produceth the said Fruit of Obedience, but grants them upon our first true purpose to turn from Sin to God, and our acceptation of and trust in Christ for doing this, and for obtaining all Salvation by him.

We shall next add the common *Popish* Notion of *Justification*, as stated by *Andradius* in his authorized Explication of the *Decree* of the VIth *Session* of the Council of *Trent*; whereto *Bellarmine*, and the generality of the *Papists* agree.

Error 4. The *first* Justification is the Renovation of an ungodly Man by the infused habit of Love, the infusion of which is merited by Christ. The *second* Justification is this habit of Love producing good Works, by the Merit whereof we are further justified, and *ex condigno* deserve eternal Life. But neither the *first* nor *second* Justification consists in the *forgiveness of Sin*.

Note, By *preparatory* Works the Council intend with the *School-men*, that our Wills moved by the Spirit do by their natural Power prepare themselves to obtain the habit of Grace, and *ex congruo*, merit the infusion of it; which Habit is that *justifying Righteousness*, for the Merit whereof

of the Sinner is at first absolved from Guilt, and accepted to eternal Life. CHAP. V.

Truth 1. NEITHER this *first* nor *second* Justification is the *Justification* described usually in the Gospel, which is not the Conversion of a Sinner, or the progressive Holiness of a Convert, but a *forensick* Act, *viz.* God's judicial absolving us from the Curse due for Sin, and adjudging us entitled to Glory for the Merits of Christ, according to the Gospel.

Truth 2. IT is not true, that *preparatory* Works do any way *deserve* from God the habit of Grace at first infused, tho' ordinarily the Divine Spirit doth by knowledge and humbling convictions abate the Obstacles to Grace in our Hearts, and put us upon seeking help from Christ; all which are as truly owing to his more common Operations, as saving Grace is to his special.

Truth 3. NEITHER the first infused Habit of Grace, nor its Acts, do *merit* further Grace or Holiness; nor yet any degree of that Pardon or Acceptance, which by divine ordination ensue thereupon.

Error 5. CHRIST hath merited, that the Habit of Love should by its virtue extinguish Sin in us by good Works, and we by these Works *merit* Reconciliation with God, Forgiveness of Sin, and eternal Glory, as what do appease his Anger, satisfy

CHAP. V. satisfy for our Guilt, and are part of the Price of eternal Glory.

Note, THE *Popish* Error concerning *Satisfaction* leads them to this Error about *Justification*; and when Justification is considered in a *Protestant* sense, *viz.* as a *forensick* Act, the true Controversy between the *Papists* and us is about the Doctrine of the *Merit of good Works*.

Truth. NEITHER Repentance, Faith, Love, nor any good Work proceeding therefrom, do in the least *merit* Reconciliation, Pardon, or eternal Life ; neither did Christ merit, that *we* might merit: But Reconciliation, Pardon, and eternal Life were *merited only* by Christ's atoning, satisfying, and meriting Sufferings and Obedience : And therefore the Righteousness of Christ is accepted and reputed the *only meriting* Righteousness in God's justifying Act, altho' this Act terminates on none (adult) besides the penitent Believer, and on all such by the *Ordination* of the Gospel.

Note, (1.) IT is one thing, for *Christ* to *merit*, that *we* might by our Works *merit* Salvation : It is another thing, for Christ to *merit* that Salvation *it self*, which he gives and applies to men on Gospel-terms : The first is *Popish*, the last is *Protestant* Doctrine. (2.) It is one thing, what our Judge in his justifying Act accounts to be the thing, which *appeaseth* his

his Anger (for Reconciliation,) makes *Compensation* to Justice (for Pardon,) and is the meriting *Price* (of eternal Life;) to which Reconciliation, Pardon, and eternal Life he now adjudgeth the penitent Believer to be entitled: Now the thing which our Judge accounts to be that, which *appeaseth* his Anger, *&c.* is the Righteousness of Christ, and *only* that. But then, it is another matter, *whom* our Judge in his justifying Act accounts and adjudgeth in conformity to the *Gospel-Offer*, to be *the Persons* who he therein promised should be actually reconciled, pardoned, and entitled to Glory, in the alone meriting virtue of what appeased his Anger, made amends for Sin, and was the Price of Glory. Now *this Person* is the penitent Believer; and he is accounted to be such, from his having Gospel-Faith in Christ, with true Repentance; and as such is adjudged to be under the favour of the foresaid *Gospel-Promise* of Reconciliation, Pardon, and Glory; which yet are procured and merited, not by his Faith, but by Christ's alone Righteousness, (as before accounted for,) and are obtained *in his Right*, who as well had these promised to him for Believers in the Covenant of *Redemption*, as they are promised by God in Christ in the *Gospel* to Believers themselves, for a personal Title to possess them, and to plead the Merits of Christ for the enjoyment of them. CHAP. V.

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CHAP. V.

HAVING teſtified *our Concord* with our Brethren, and added this *further account* of what we eſteem *Truth* and *Error* in the Doctrines of *Satisfaction* and *Juſtification*, we muſt expreſs our Thankfulneſs to God, that our Brethren in the foreſaid *Declaration* have teſtified againſt *ignorant and ſcandalous Perſons* intruding themſelves into the Miniſtry. And tho' the Vindication of ourſelves in this matter be needleſs, when our Principles and Practice are ſo well known; and it's ſo notorious, that of the great number of *unqualified Men* who are of late turned Preachers, thoſe very few who *broke out of any of our Congregations* in this City, received no Approbation or Countenance from us; and to avoid Reſtraint and Diſcouragement they renounced the Name of *Preſbyterians*, yea, preached againſt us; yet to ſupport what we can this preſent Teſtimony of our *Congregational Brethren*, we'll publiſh *one of the Articles* agreed to by all of us for ſtrengthening our *Union* after our ſaid Brethren's Receſs, which is as follows,

" 6. THAT no *Miniſters of the Union* " ſhall admit, or conſent, that any Perſon " ſhall preach in their Congregations, unleſs " they have been ſolemnly *admitted* to the " Miniſtry by *Ordination*, or *approved* by " ſome of the *united Brethren*, or pro- " duce a *Teſtimony* that they have been

" under

" under proper and preparatory Studies to " qualify them for that ſacred Func- " tion."

CHAP. VI.

Some further Examination what is Socinianiſm, *as to the Doctrine of* Chriſt's Satisfaction, *and what is not ſo; with a brief account of ſeveral* Phraſes *uſed by* Socinians *and by the* Orthodox *in a very contrary ſenſe.*

CHAP. VI.

A STRICT Obſervation in how uncertain a ſenſe *Terms* and *Phraſes* are made uſe of, muſt convince one, that *Errors* may be eaſily concealed from the Ignorant, and the *Orthodox* as eaſily impeached without ground, by crafty Perſons who deſign impoſing on the Vulgar. I ſhall give an Inſtance in the Controverſy before me, which makes it evident, that Men's Explications and main Hypotheſis muſt be regarded above words, otherwiſe their ſenſe will be miſtaken.

[1.] I FIND the *Socinians* admit and make uſe of the words, which ſome *Or-*

CHAP. VI. *thodox Divines* esteemed most distinguishly expressive of their own sense: Such as, *Commutation of Persons*, as well as *Things for Persons: Substitution and Surrogation of Christ's Person in our room* (a): *Christ's dying in our stead* (b): *Christ was an expiatory Sacrifice* (c): *His Sufferings were Punishments* (d): *Our Sins were an impulsive Cause of Christ's Death* (e): *God was moved by Christ's Death to give us Forgiveness* (f); *yea, it was a Satisfaction* (g): *Christ was made a Sinner, yea the chief Sinner* (h). And many more such I could mention: But this evidenceth, that these very Phrases are capable of a very ill sense, as well as a good one. *Ruarus* admits, Christ did in a sense *impetrate our Pardon* by his Death. *Epist.* 64. So doth *Crellius*, *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 9. *part.* 3.

[2.] THE last Chapter gave us such a Summary of their Assertions, as demonstrates they use these Expressions in no good sense; but if you consult the places now cited, and those in *Chap.* V. you'll find

(a) Crell. *vol.* ii. *in* 2 Cor. v. 14. *vol.* iii. *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 9. *par.* 2. (b) Crell. *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 9, 10. (c) Crell. *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 9. (d) Crell. *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 10. Socin. *de Servat. lib.* 2. *cap.* 13. (e) Socin. *tom.* i *Prælect. cap.* 21. *pag.* 580. (f) Crell. *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 1. *par.* 11. (g) Crell. *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 7, 8 (h) Crell. *vol.* ii. *in* 2 Cor. v. 14. Slichting. *tom.* ii. *in* 2 Cor. v. 21.

find them wreſted to conſiſt with the fore- CHAP.
mentioned *Errors*. But becauſe it will be VI.
tedious to particularize, I ſhall enumerate
the Cauſes and Ends they plainly and expreſsly aſcribe the Death of Chriſt to. (1.) They aſſign *Chriſt's Death* to God's mere Dominion over him as his entire Creature, whom he would reward for it, tho' not as merited (i). (2.) It was an Example of Patience (k). (3.) It was a Preparation of his Sacrifice to be offered to God in Heaven for our Sins (l). (4.) It ſhew'd how much he deſired our Salvation, tho' ſuch great Sinners, and how faithful he would be in expiating our Sins in Heaven, when he endured ſuch dreadful things for our ſakes; which God would have chiefly conſidered in our High-Prieſt (m). (5.) His Death impreſſed a tender Affection and Pity towards us, that ſo he would ſuccour us who were to be ſo extreamly afflicted: God would not have put Mankind in his hands, unleſs he firſt ſuffered Death for Sinners: And that God might render us more aſſured, that if we obeyed we ſhould have eternal Life, Chriſt ſhould be ſo faſhioned, that in a ſenſe it ſhould appear, Chriſt had more Tenderneſs for us than

(i) Slichting. *in* Rom. iii. 24. & Phil. ii. 9. Crell. *Reſp. ad Grot. cap.* 2. *par.* 1. *& cap.* 4. *par.* 7. (k) Crell. *ubi ſupra, ad cap.* 5. (l) Crell. *Reſp. ad Grot. pag.* 198, 199, 215. (m) Crell. *ubi ſupra, cap.* 7. *& cap.* 1.

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God himself; or otherwise, it had been as to us alike, that God had saved us immediately, as to have saved us by Christ (n). Or, (6.) It was to establish the new Covenant and Promises (o). (7.) To confirm his Doctrine (p). (8.) To come, pursuant to God's Decree, to be crowned with Glory and Honour, and invested with Authority and Power to convert, protect, forgive, and give us eternal Life (q). (9.) That there might be greater Rewards promised to induce us to repent, than there were before (r). (10.) To take away those greater Sins, which the legal Sacrifices were not appointed for (s). (11.) To beget in us a firm hope of Life, tho' we should die as terrible a Death (t). (12.) That we might not fear Death, or the Curse, which we see conquered by him (u). (13.) That we might be induced to leave our Sin, when he died that we might be reclaimed from it by such hope of Pardon upon leaving of it (x). And, (14.) To

(n) Crell. *vol.* i. *pag.* 612, 613. (o) Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 596. Crell. *vol.* i. *pag.* 620, 621. (p) Crell. *vol.* i. *pag.* 612, 614, 616. (q) Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 578, 579. & *cap.* 21. *pag.* 580, 599. (r) Crell. *vol.* i. *pag.* 619. Woltzogen. *vol.* i. *Prælect. cap.* 2. (s) Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 590, 594. Slichting. *tom.* ii. *pag.* 37. Crell. *vol* ii. *in* Heb. ix. 13, 14, 15. (t) Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 667. Crell. *vol.* i. *pag.* 618. (u) Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 575, 596. (x) Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 577, 588.

To make known how highly kind and pacified God was to us (y). I paſs by a compliance with Pagan Cuſtoms. CHAP. VI.

[3.] As they *limit Chriſt's Death* in this manner, excluſively of and in oppoſition to other Cauſes and Ends, which the proper *Satisfaction of Chriſt* more directly ſuppoſeth, (as you ſee in the *fifth Chapter:*) So I could eaſily ſhew, how they dilute their own ſeeming Conceſſions, as well as reduce plain Scripture-expreſſions to that Inſignificancy, that no man can hope by their method to apprehend any kind of words with certainty as to their meaning. One while, an *as if* (a *quaſi*) is all they intend by their large Grants; " *as if* a redeeming Price, *&c.* God is " *as it were* moved, and *as it were* obliged " by Chriſt to pardon us:" Another while, all is figurative, as a *metaphorical* Redemption; " Chriſt's Death was an expi- " atory Sacrifice, that is, *metonymically* " and *ſynechdochically* called ſo; and it " chiefly ſignifies, what by God's Decree " followed upon it, *viz.* his Entrance in- " to Heaven." Many more might be heaped *of this kind.* Socin. *de Servat. par.* 2. *cap.* 2. Crell. *vol.* i. *in* Rom. iii. 24. *vol.* iii. *Reſp. ad Grot. cap.* 8. *par.* 3.

(y) Socin. *tom.* i. *pag.* 586. Crell. *vol.* ii. *par.* 2. *pag.* 285.

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pag. 198, 199. Socin. *tom.* i. *Prælect. cap.* 20.

[4.] THEY ſometimes ſtate the Difference between themſelves and others; and there are ſome things which they ſtill adhere to, and ſecure; however they perplex this Controverſy with their ſeeming Grants and equivocal Expreſſions.

(1.) *Socinus* ſtates this Queſtion, and denies it: "*Are our Sins blotted out by* "*any Compenſation or Satisfaction, or elſe* "*by Forgiveneſs?* Moſt think they are "blotted out, a Satisfaction intervening; "but we think they are blotted out *by ſim-*"*ple Forgiveneſs*, or a Pardon abſolute-"ly free." *Prælect. cap.* 15. *pag.* 565. He alſo ſtates the Difference with *Covet*, and puts this for the Poſition held by his own Party. "I judge and think "this to be the *Orthodox* Determina-"tion, That Jeſus Chriſt is *therefore* our "Saviour, becauſe he has made known "to us the way of eternal Life; and "in his own Perſon, both by the Exam-"ple of his Life, and by his riſing "from the dead, hath given aſſurance of "it, and made it evident; as alſo, that he "will give eternal Life to us who believe "him. But I affirm, that he neither *ſa-*"*tisfied* Divine Juſtice, by which we Sin-"ners did deſerve to be damned; nor was "there *any need* that he ſhould *ſatisfy* "*it.*" Socin. *tom.* ii. *de Servat. cap.* 1. *pag.* 121. *Crellius* ſtates this Queſtion; "Did

" Did the Redemption wrought by Christ CHAP.
" include his Payment of a *true Price* to VI.
" God for our Sins, which he calls Satis-
" faction?" *Resp. ad Grot. cap.* 8. This he denies: And he and others of them take great advantage of *Covet*'s making use of *Creditor*, *Debtor*, *and Debt*, to express their Judgment in this Controversy. Other Instances might be given.

(2.) THE principal things they adhere to are, " 1. That Christ *did not appease* " God's Anger towards Sinners. 2. That " what Christ did and suffered had *no* " *meriting Virtue*, and so *did not merit* " from God our Pardon, Acceptance and " eternal Life, or properly move God to " give or promise them." These are the Heart of *Socinianism* as to the *Satisfaction of Christ*; and they do exclude what Christ performs *in Heaven*, as well as his Death on Earth, from any proper influence God-ward as to these things; tho' to effect what they call *Expiation*, they ascribe more to Christ's *abiding on God's Right-hand* taking care of the Church, than to *his Resurrection*, and more to his Resurrection than to *his Death*; these two last being but the decreed intervening way of coming to the other, which they call *the Expiation itself*. Hence they always deny any proper *redeeming Price*, and say, " God quitted his Right to punish us " without any respect to Christ;" and

CHAP. VI. distinguish in their account of Expiation *on God's part*, which they call his own Act; and *on our part*, which is, say they, Christ's giving us eternal Life; wherein is contained a full deliverance from the Punishment of Sin. As to Expiation *on God's part*, that's in no wise by Christ's inclining God to forgive our Sins by his Sacrifice; yea, *Socinus* tells us, "God alone "expiates Sin." And when *Crellius* blames *Grotius*, for making *Socinus* to confine the Efficacy of Christ's Sacrifice to *Sins future* for Prevention or Pardon, and excluding the Forgiveness of *Sins past*, otherwise than as it begets Faith, and so turns us from Sin; What greater expiating Virtue doth he ascribe to it, under the notion of an expiating Sacrifice? it's this, "It takes away the Guilt and Punish-"ment of all Sins, *tho' past* before Con-"version, and however great:" But how, and wherein? He answers, "It's partly "by declaring and granting us a Right to "that thing, and partly by actually taking "away Divine Punishments." *But is that Right, or Pardon, at all properly procured by this Sacrifice?* No, by no means; that he had denied, and abides by the Denial here, and in the following Sections. The sum is; "A crucified Saviour's being "exalted, and in Heaven taking care of "our Salvation, assures us, that we shall "be partakers of the Pardon appointed and

" and promiſed before, by the mere Mer- CHAP.
" cy of God, without reſpect to Chriſt; VI.
" and Chriſt as the authorized Sponſor on
" God's part conveys it. and aſſiſted with
" the Divine Power fully removes the Pu-
" niſhment, or rather God himſelf doth
" it." Nay, by their Scheme you cannot well ſee, that they allow leſs expiating Virtue to *Men's Prayers*, than to the legal Sacrifices, yea, or to the yearly; for, ſay they, " we expiate our own Sins by thoſe " Prayers;" and ſcarce more to *Chriſt's Sacrifice*, than to the Legal, except as to more ſorts of Sin, and its greater aptneſs to diſſuade us from Sin, by the Love of God, and ſtrong grounds of hopes of higher Rewards, being more evidenced and aſſured by this Sacrifice of Chriſt, than by thoſe of the Law: " For this Sacri-
" fice of Chriſt is no other than an inter-
" vening Means, which being performed,
" that Diſcharge follows by the Divine
" Decree, which the ſelf-inclined God,
" unmoved by any thing Chriſt was to
" do or ſuffer, reſolved freely to beſtow
" of his mere Mercy."

To add no more, they carefully diſtinguiſh between the *Impetration of Pardon*, &c. with reſpect to the Divine Will, and the means of the *Application of that Pardon* to the Sinner. From the *former* they exclude Chriſt's Satisfaction and Merits, and confine their Virtue altogether to the *latter*.

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latter. The thing itſelf is unprocured, as from God; the Sinner's obtaining it is ſubſerved by Chriſt, by what he performs to make us meet for it, and to poſſeſs us in the Effects of it according to the way decreed, and that only becauſe *decreed*. Socin. *tom.* i. *Prælect. cap.* 27, 21, 22, 23, 24. *tom.* ii. *de Servat. cap.* 4. Crell. *Reſp. ad Grot. cap.* 8, 9, 10.

[5.] IT is very obvious, that the *Socinian* Controverſy lies not in thoſe things, wherein ſome are induced to place them, becauſe of certain *Phraſes* ſometimes occurring in Debates concerning the Doctrine of Chriſt's Satisfaction. To inſtance in a few.

(1.) IT is not, whether the Sufferings of a *Sponſor* in the ſtead of the Sinner, be *in ſo ſtrict a ſenſe* a proper Puniſhment, as the Sufferings of the *Delinquent* himſelf would be? This is nothing with them; for their Queſtion is, "Were Chriſt's Suf- "ferings ſuch an Inſtance of God's *rectoral* "*Hatred* againſt our Sins, and *Anger* a- "gainſt Sinners, as that thereby the Ho- "nour of his Juſtice, and of his injured "Government and Law, was provided "for and vindicated, and Sinners were to "be deterred from Sin by God's inſiſt- "ing upon ſuch a *penal Compenſation*, be- "fore he would be *reconciled* to us?" Puniſhment under this notion they expreſsly diſpute againſt.

(2.) NOR

(2.) NOR is it about the Phraſe, *Commutation of Perſons* between Chriſt and Sinners: For this they grant; and admit a *Surrogation* of the typical Sacrifice inſtead of the Sinner, and a *Subſtitution* of Chriſt in our place. Their point depends not on any ſuch mere words. But, "was Chriſt "appointed, and did he conſent, to en- "dure what the Sinner was to ſuffer, that "*in virtue thereof* the offended God might "be *appeaſed*, and the Sinner *delivered?*" This is the thing they oppoſe. See *Crell. Reſp. ad Grot. cap.* 9. *par.* 14. explaining this very Phraſe. CHAP. VI.

(3.) NOR is it with them the Queſtion, Whether Chriſt's Sufferings were in part the *Idem*, and in other reſpects *a full Equivalent* to the Puniſhments the Sinner deſerved? No, their Arguments run againſt the *Equivalency*; and on that account they deny, that his Sufferings could be a *full Price* of Redemption, or a *Satisfaction*; and well they may, when they call him *a mere Creature.* Crell. *Reſp. ad Grot. cap.* 4. *par.* 2. *& cap.* 6. *par.* 18. It's the *Proportion* in the Value, they moſt directly militate againſt.

(4.) NOR is it, Whether Chriſt was a *Sinner* in judicial Eſteem, or was he reputed the *innocent* Mediator making *amends to Juſtice* for our Sins, that we the Offenders might be redeemed *by his merits*, who, to make Satisfaction, ſubmitted to be dealt

CHAP. VI. dealt with as if he had been a *Sinner?* The laſt is enough for their Abhorrence; and tho' *Socinus* took all advantages to expoſe the Orthodox, in repreſenting their Opinion as to the *Imputation of Sin* to Chriſt, yet he grants, they hold that Chriſt was *truly innocent*, and was reputed ſo by God even when he was puniſhed as if an Offender. *De Servat. cap.* 6. It's true, ſometimes they would force ſome ſuch Conſequence on the words of the Orthodox, as if Chriſt muſt be legally reputed *a Sinner*; but that is to furniſh themſelves with an Argument to *ridicule* the true Doctrine of Satisfaction. And note, they deny, that 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *Chriſt was made Sin*, is to be underſtood, that Chriſt was made *a Sacrifice for Sin*; yea, ſome render it, he was made *a Sinner*, as *Slichtingius*, &c. and that God dealt with him *as a Sinner*. Socin. *in loc.*

(5.) IT is far enough from the *Socinian* Controverſy, Whether Chriſt was *immediately obliged* by the Law of works *to die?* that is, Did God thus ſentence him, "Thou Chriſt haſt ſinned, and therefore "thou ſhalt die?" Or, was he *immediately* obliged to die by the Covenant of Redemption, and *mediately* by the Law of works? that is, Is the Sentence to be thus apprehended? "Whereas thou my Son, "the Mediator, haſt with my Conſent, "declared thy willingneſs to expiate Sin, "and

" and ranſom Sinners, juſtly condemned by the Curſe of my Law to die; and whereas my *vindictive Juſtice*, the Honour of my Law and Government, required, that I the *Rector* ſhould exact Satisfaction and Reparation for the crimes of theſe Sinners *by thy Death*, if I agreed to *thy redeeming* and ſaving them, and thou haſt *obliged thyſelf* to die in their ſtead to redeem them, *therefore* thou ſhalt die this accurſed, ſhameful Death." This, I ſay, is no part of the Diſpute with the *Socinians:* For the laſt account doth as directly oppoſe their Notions as the former, nay much more; for it aſſerts the Compact before his Incarnation, and conſequently the *Divinity*, or at leaſt the *Preexiſtence* of Chriſt. CHAP. VI.

(6.) NOR yet is it of any moment with them, whether men ſay, *Sin* would be *in a more proper ſenſe* the *immediate* meritorious Cauſe of the *Sinner's dying* who committed the Sin, than of *Chriſt's dying* who did not commit the Sin, tho' he obliged himſelf to make *Satisfaction* for it in the Sinner's *ſtead*, that the provoked God might be reconciled to him. The Point with them being this, Did *our Sins*, notwithſtanding God's *merciful* diſpoſition, retain that *Demerit* in his account, as rendered *Satisfaction* for Sin by Death *neceſſary* to reconcile him to Sinners? and conſequently

CHAP. VI. ſequently did Chriſt ſuffer Death, to make that *Satisfaction*, which was become thus *neceſſary* by Sin, and yet impoſſible for the Sinner to make?

(7.) IT is true, the *Socinians* uſually ſay, " *Our Sins* were the *occaſion* of " Chriſt's Death :" Yet oft they call them *the antecedent Cauſe*; but *occaſion* being more common and agreeable to their *Hypotheſis*, I wiſh others had waved that word to prevent Abuſe. Nevertheleſs the mere uſing of that word is far from arguing any man to *Socinianize*, ſo that he apply it to a ſenſe oppoſite to what *Socinians* do. This will appear, if we conſider in what ſenſe the *Socinians* uſe it: They ſay, " *Our Sin* was an *occaſion* of Chriſt's " Death, as Sin was that which we were " to be reclaimed from, and our hope ſup- " ported againſt: And the *Death of Chriſt* " was that way, in which God, who was " not *unreconciled* before, did appoint " Chriſt to reclaim us from our Sins; as " his Death aſſureth us of the Truth of " his Doctrine and Promiſes, and mani- " feſteth God's prior Reconciliation; and " ſo his Death became an Argument to " incline us to believe and repent, and al- " ſo a *Cauſa ſine qua non*, both of a ſtrong " Motive to Holineſs, *viz.* the endleſs " Glory deſigned in Heaven for us, (which " was before ſhut up,) and of that Power, " Authority, and Care of Chriſt at God's " Right-

" Right-hand, to bring us into the Pos- CHAP.
" session of it." But when others shall VI.
call our Sins an *occasion* of Christ's Death,
and explain it thus; " That it was an *oc-*
" *casion* of Christ's Death as a *penal Sa-*
" *tisfaction* to the *Justice* of God, and
" that he endured it to *pacify* God to Sin-
" ners; that God's *hatred* of Sin, and his
" Justice (yea *punitive Justice*) might be
" no less demonstrated in Christ's *Satis-*
" *faction*, than if the Sinners had been
" *damned*; and his Obedience, and his
" Punishments, wherein *vindictive Justice*
" was thus glorified, did *merit* the Pardon
" of our Sins, and eternal Life:" Such an *Ex-*
plication doth as much oppose *Socinianism*,
as if they had used the word *meritorious*
Cause, instead of *occasion*.

THAT no Person may pretend the Re-
verend Mr. *Baxter*'s Authority in favour
of *Socinianism*, because he sometimes calls
our Sins an *occasion of Christ's Death*; I
do assure the Reader, that he explains the
word *occasion* in the last sense, and in the
most direct opposition to *Socinianism:* Nor
can any pretend, but that the reason of his
using this word, as also *pro causâ meritoriâ*,
(or instead of a meritorious Cause,)
is only to *distinguish* Christ the *Sponsor*
making Satisfaction to Justice for *our Sins*,
from the *Sinner* himself, when suffering
for *his own Sins*. To evidence which, I
have

CHAP. VI. have repeated his own Assertions under this *seventh* Head; and could easily cite his own words, which exactly agree to what is *Anti-socinian* in the *six* foregoing Heads. See *Method. Theolog. par.* iii. *cap.* 1. *determ.* 11, 12, 15.

NEED I add that he says, "God declared to the feeling of Christ *his Displeasure* against Sin, which was the *Cause* "of all the Miseries which he endured; "that is, (saith he,) Christ bare *those Punishments*, which the Anger and Displeasure of God against Sin and Sinners "*caused* to be inflicted on him our Sponsor; (*ubi sup. Disp.* 4.) and all this *in* "*our stead.* (*Determ.* 10.) He made *Satisfaction* for our Sins, to God as *Rector*, and as the injured Party: (*Determ.* "14.) Christ's Death answered all the "Ends of the *most proper Punishments*, "and of the *Threatning* of the Law. (*Determ.* 12.)" When he calls Sin an *occasion* of Christ's Death, he there calls it also "*a remote meritorious Cause*; and "so far *a proper meritorious Cause*, as "when *Children* are punished for their Parents Sins: (*Determ.* 5.) His *Satisfaction* yielded to our most just Rector *a* "*sufficient ground*, on which to *forgive* penitent Believers spiritual and eternal Punishments: (*Disp.* 2.) Nay, he sees "not, supposing the Law of works, how "God *could forgive* our Sins without the

"*penal*

" *penal Satisfaction* of Chriſt. (*Diſp.* 2. & *Determ.* 15.)" It were endleſs to produce the Inſtances demonſtrating the *Orthodoxneſs* of this great Man, as to the *Satisfaction* of Chriſt, againſt *Socinianiſm*. And by the way, ſuch as ſay Chriſt's *penal Satisfaction* was *not neceſſary* to the forgiveneſs of our Sins, do a thouſand times more favour *Socinianiſm*, than Mr. *Baxter*'s notions or words can be wreſted to. CHAP. VI.

PERHAPS others who follow *Epiſcopius*, and ſome other *Arminians*, (when all muſt acquit him of *Socinianiſm*,) may ſurmiſe, he favoureth their notion of *Chriſt's Death*, as if it were a Satisfaction only *to the Will of God*, and not a full Satisfaction *to the Juſtice of God*. To this I anſwer, Mr. *Baxter* diſtinguiſheth *Satisfaction* into that which is the fulfilling the *Will* of a Perſon, and that which is the *Payment* of what was owing by an *Equivalent* otherwiſe not due. And he affirms, " that Chriſt's *Satisfaction* was not a mere fulfilling the " *Will* of God, (tho' it ſuppoſeth his Conſent;) but it was *a full Equivalent* to " what Puniſhments we deſerved, in that " it better anſwered the Ends of Divine " Government, than the Sinner's Puniſhment would have done; it more fully " demonſtrated the *vindictive Juſtice* of " God, than if the Sinner had been damned; and it was *a full Satisfaction* to " *governing Juſtice*, and the End of the

CHAP. VI.

" Law." *Ubi ſupra, Determ.* 10, 11, 12, 15.

I THOUGHT this account neceſſary, not only for the forementioned End, but alſo that our Agreement in oppoſition to *Socinianiſm* might not exclude Mr. *Baxter*, and ſuch as approve of his Scheme; which would add ſtrength to that Hereſy, and be injurious to many worthy Perſons. Nor ought a *few words* ſo fully explained be preſſed to brand them with that *odious Title*, who could more plauſibly fix the ſame Character on Perſons, from *things* plainly aſſerted *in the Socinian ſenſe*, and *ſubſerving* their *Hypotheſis*: As, " that " *Chriſt's Death* was not *neceſſary* to the " remiſſion of Sin; that the *Promiſe* of " Forgiveneſs is *no Effect* of Chriſt's " Death; that *Repentance* under the Goſ- " pel is *an Effect* of juſtifying Faith in " Chriſt; and that the preaching of *Re-* " *conciliation* to Sinners, is only to publiſh " to them that God is *already reconciled to* " *them*, and to call them to be *reconciled* " *to God.*" Many others might be inſtanced; but I think it were unjuſt, even upon ſuch grounds, to call any of theſe *Socinians*.

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CHAP. VII.

An Enquiry into what Difference seems to remain concerning the Satisfaction *of Christ, and the* Justification *of a Sinner; and this Difference reduced below any Cause of Discord.*

I THINK both Sides are acquitted from all *dangerous Errors* concerning the *Satisfaction* of Christ, and the *Justification* of a Sinner: Nor can I doubt, but the impartial Reader must apprehend the remaining *Difference* doth not lie in Opinions about these *Doctrines themselves*, but in accommodating *some words* in opposition to *other Errors* which either Side have more especially applied their minds to confute; unless he should also ascribe it to a Zeal for sundry received *Phrases* on the one part, and an apprehension on the other part, that more *accuracy* is become needful since those Phrases were received. On the whole, it appears, CHAP. VII.

I. THAT in both these Doctrines, the

CHAP. VII. visible Spring of what Difference remains is a different notion of *Christ's Suretiship*. For by this, the word *Imputation*, as used in both these Doctrines, is governed, *viz.* how *our Sins* were imputed *to Christ* when he *satisfied*, and how *Christ's Righteousness* is imputed *to us* when we are *justified:* Both which depend upon the various Conceptions of the *Suretiship* of Christ, and the manner of his representing us, which I will now begin with.

THE *one Side* think him *a mediating Surety*; and distinguishing, both as to the matter engaged, and the Instrument wherein he voluntarily engaged himself, as also with relation to the Respect he had to us therein,

1. THEY consider Christ in the Covenant of *Redemption*, as agreeing with his Father *the terms* of Satisfaction to Justice, and Impetration of Life for Sinners, and *obliging himself* to assume our Nature, and therein perfectly to obey the Law, and to die an accursed Death, with whatever was *equivalent* to what by the Covenant of works *our Sins* deserved. Here they think Christ did not covenant *strictly* in our stead, or as *our Proxy*, tho' he covenanted *to die* in our stead, even *strictly so:* He *transacted* as a free Interposer, tho' for our Salvation; we were *no federating Party*, tho' we were the Persons *whose Salvation* was his promised Reward? And therefore we have

have more Reaſon, ſince we are become his Members, to ſay we intercede in Chriſt *now*, than to ſay that we covenanted in Chriſt *then*. Finally, they account *his Act of engaging* ſo peculiar to himſelf, that his non-performance of what he engaged, (which was impoſſible,) had not made us *more guilty*, tho' it would have left us *miſerable* for *our* own Sins, there being no other way to redeem us. CHAP. VII.

2. THEY find Chriſt called a *Surety* in the *Goſpel-Covenant* made with fallen Man, *Heb.* vii. 22. and no where elſe. This Covenant ſuppoſeth the former, yea ſuppoſeth Chriſt's having *executed* his Engagements by the Covenant of *Redemption* to make Satisfaction to Juſtice; (that is, it was at firſt accepted as if executed;) for this Covenant with Man doth not adjuſt the *terms of Redemption*, but the *way* of conveying the *Effects* of that Redemption; and is called the *Teſtament* of our Lord Jeſus, whereby he bequeaths the Bleſſings he acquired by his atoning Death. In this Covenant Chriſt is ſuch a *Surety*, as not only aſſures us all will be performed which is promis'd to us on God's part, but alſo undertakes to bring in the Elect, and to ſecure the Perſeverance of Believers unto eternal Life, by his exerting that power and authority he has received. But here alſo they apprehend Chriſt *a diſtinct federating Party*; a Mediator, treating and obliging

CHAP. VII. himself to make the *Covenant* stand sure, and to effect the Ends it was designed for: But he binds not *himself* to believe, repent, or persevere *for us*; but that *we* shall repent, believe, and persevere: Nor doth *his* Engagement that we should do so, prevent *our* personal Engagement by Covenant to do it our selves, tho' *in his Strength*. Now *our Act* of engaging is not *his* engaging Act, but an Effect of it; nor is *our* repenting *his* repenting Act, but the Effect of his engaged *Assistance*; nor is that Assistance of his *reckoned* to be legally our assisting our selves; nor can we say, that we covenanted *in Christ* to bring in the Elect, or that Believers shall persevere. By which, with other Reasons, we are induced to think, that in covenanting he transacts still as *Mediator*; but by *obliging himself* to these great Performances, in order to our doing what we are personally obliged to do, and our receiving what we are necessitated to receive, if ever we be saved even in a Gospel-way, (tho' it supposeth him already crucified,) he is properly called *a Surety of the new Covenant*, yet still connoting him *a Mediator*.

I NEED not suggest, that if in this *new Covenant* Christ's *Suretiship* will not infer our being *one federating Party* with Christ, and hence that we covenanted *in him*; it will far less follow, that we did so in the Covenant of *Redemption*, which treated of things

things so improper to be once propos'd to us as *undertaking Parties*, much less as *Principals*, which to strictly legal Sureties always are supposed. But of this I have treated in *Man made righteous*, and in *Answer to the Report*, and in the *Postscript to Gospel-Truth*. CHAP. VII.

THE *other Side* think, that Christ, with the Father's consent, came into the Covenant of *works*, considered as a *Bond*, (as unviolated, say *some*, as violated, say *others*,) and therein became *one federating Party* with us, (as *Elect* some say, as *Believers* say others,) even *such a Surety* as made the Covenant of *works* run thus: "If thou "Christ my Son, *or* you the Elect (or "Believers,) do obey all the Law, you "shall live: But if they sin, thou *or* they "shall die; or they having sinned, thou "shalt die." And conceiving Christ to be as a strict *pecuniary Surety* in this one Bond with us, they esteem him *one legal Person* and Representative in such a sense, as that *we* did covenant *in him*, and are legally esteemed to do and suffer what he did, and not only secured of Salvation *in his right*, and for his sake.

THIS may be accounted by some a *dangerous* Difference. And so it were *on our part*, if we did not own, that Christ's fulfilling of the Law was an *Article* in the Covenant of *Redemption*; and that we are as fully *assured* of Salvation, if we *accept* of Christ, as if we had covenanted in him;

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and that he hath engaged the Elect ſhould *accept of him*, though they did not covenant in him; and that Believers have as *inviolable* an Intereſt in the Benefits of Chriſt's Death, both in his right and by the Goſpel-promiſe, as if they were legally eſteemed to ſuffer what he did ſuffer: But all this we acknowledge. It would be as dangerous *on our Brethren's part* to ſay, that we covenanted in Chriſt and obeyed in him, if they did not *renounce* all proud aſſuming Boaſts, as if they were *as righteous as Chriſt*, or as if they ſtood on terms with God, needing *no more Acts of Mercy* than that one of *appointing* Chriſt to be Mediator, being after that on terms of ſtrict Juſtice, and above Forgiveneſs, *&c.* The like Danger would enſue from their Poſition, if they did not acknowledge the *neceſſity of Faith* to Juſtification, and this Faith to be always accompanied with Repentance and perſevering Holineſs. But *our Brethren* renounce the former, and own the latter.

MATTERS ſtanding thus, will afford no ground to hereticate each other. *We* think, a mediating *Surety* obliged in a *diſtinct Bond* to perform the utmoſt which our Brethren affirm Chriſt to have done, doth *as well* ſecure our State, and ſupport our Faith, as if in the *ſame Bond*; and doth better account for the ſapiential methods of Divine Government towards man *ſince the Fall*,

Fall, with God's judicial Procedures to- CHAP.
wards man as *under Goſpel-offers*, and VII.
his *ſuſpending* Chriſt's merited Benefits till men believe, as alſo for his recorded Pleadings with Sinners. *Our Brethren* think, not that Chriſt did more for our Salvation than we allow, but that *we* did more in Chriſt; and thence judge our Faith more ſupported, and the Law of works more honoured in their way. But did each Side perceive all the aforeſaid reſpective Ends alike provided for, and evil Conſequences equally avoided, the Notion in debate could for its own ſake admit no Diſpute on either ſide. And is it not pity to *hate each other* for miſtaking the beſt Scheme, to avoid the *ſame Evils* which both would prevent, and ſecure that *ſame Good* which both honeſtly aim at by their reſpective *Hypotheſes?*

FORBEARANCE is the juſter in this point, becauſe it turns upon a Solution of this Queſtion; When *Adam* is called *a Figure of Chriſt*, (*Rom.* v. 14.) is there not ſome *diſparity* in their *Repreſentation* of men, as well as in thoſe other things there inſtanced? *Our Brethren* think *Chriſt* ſo fully prefigured by *Adam* as a *Repreſentative*, that we *as truly* obeyed and ſuffered *in Chriſt*, as we ſinned *in Adam*. We think the *Figure*, as to Repreſentation, is to be explained thus: *As no man* becomes a Sinner, or dieth, whoſe depravedneſs and death were not procured and merited by *Adam*'s

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first Sin; and tho' the *Pagan Sinners* who died, did not actually sin against a revealed positive Law, as *Adam* did, yet he was the *Root of Death* to them, as well as to the *Jews* under *Moses*'s Law: *So no men* are quickned, justified, sanctified, or saved, but *Christ is a Root* of Life, Grace, Justification, Holiness, and Glory to them, (in all these by his *Merits*, in some also by his *Spirit* and *Power*.)

BUT yet we conceive *Christ* may as well answer *Adam*'s *Figure* here intended, by our being quickned, justified, and saved *by Christ's Obedience imputed* to us, without our being *esteemed* to have obeyed and suffered *in him*; as Christ was condemned and died *for Adam's Sin imputed* to him, tho' he was not *esteemed* to have sinned *in Adam*. As he was condemned *by our* Disobedience, so we are justified *by his* Obedience, *viz.* the first by his own Compact with the Father, the last by that and the Gospel too: He was not condemned by any *Imputation* that made him by the Law *a Sinner*, as having sinned in *Adam*; neither are we justified by being legally judged *Sufferers* or *Obeyers* in him. It avails not to say, Christ was legally a Sinner, and yet not reputed to *sin in Adam*, because Christ was *our Root*: For tho' he was our Root as to Grace, Acceptance, Pardon and Glory, and whatever else did *proceed from him to us*, as our *Saviour*; nevertheless, if he was *a Sinner*, he

he could not as to this be our Root, unless we *derive Sin* from him: But surely *that Denomination* must have its Root, not in him, but in those that were Sinners before him, and whose Sins were imputed to him: They must denominate that *one legal Person* into which he came, a *sinful guilty Person*; as he doth that *one obeying, satisfying Person*, into which we are admitted; (Which terms I argue from, as espoused by our Brethren.) CHAP. VII.

FINALLY, we are inclined to set the foresaid Limit to Christ's Representation, by this among many other Reasons; that in *Rom.* v. 14. where *Adam* is called a *Figure*, the Death of those Heathens was *merited* by their *own* personal Transgressions, as well as by *Adam*'s Disobedience: But the Elect, even when *Believers*, do not *merit* Life by their *own* personal Obedience; and therefore we are *not represented* altogether in the same manner in *Christ* as in *Adam*. And now,

II. FROM the former, another point ariseth, referring expressly to the *Satisfaction, viz.* In what sense *our Sins* were *imputed to Christ.*

THE *one Side* say, our Sins were imputed to Christ, only as to *Guilt*, or Obligation *to bear the Punishments* which we deserved for them; which punishments tho' he obliged himself to endure *in our stead*

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ſtead to reconcile God to us, yet that did not render him *a Sinner* in God's account; becauſe that Title reſults from the violation of the Precept, abſtractedly from a reſpect to the threatning: And conceiving he was not *a Sinner* in our ſtead, tho' he ſuffer'd in our ſtead the puniſhments due to our ſins, they think he was eſteemed by God what in truth he was, *viz.* the holy, innocent Mediator, puniſhable by his own conſent for the Sins which he came to expiate, and which were not expiable without his dying in our ſtead.

BUT *our Brethren* think, our Sins were ſo imputed to Chriſt, as to give him the denomination and judicial acceptation of *a Sinner* in the eſteem of God and the Law.

YET leſt the difference ſhould appear greater than it is, it's fit I inform you, on the one hand, that *our Brethren* deny, that Chriſt had any Sin or Defilement in him, or had any Sin of his own; they were *our Sins*, only *imputed* to him; and he was *a legal Sinner* by being *one politick Perſon* with thoſe Sinners, whom the Law eſteemed real Sinners, and condemned as ſuch. On the other hand, *we* own, that (ſuppoſing the Covenant of *Redemption*,) he was as truly *obliged*, and God the juſt *Rector* at as full liberty to puniſh him for our Sins, as if he had been reputed *a Sinner*: Nay, Divine Juſtice *required* the inflicting thoſe

thoſe puniſhments on him, if the Sinner was to be redeemed from them for his ſake. CHAP. VII.

Now, Reader, can this difference juſtify mutual Cenſures or Alienation? What is a Sinner without Filth, yea or any Fault of his own, above *a Sponſor* obliged to bear the puniſhments of other men's Sins in the ſtead of the Offenders? And they who acknowledge him to be this, what leſs ſay they of him, than the others mean, tho' ſcrupulous of that harſher Denomination? At leaſt it would appear ſtrange to revile each other for a different explication of that Text, 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *He was made Sin for us.* The *one Side* think, he was made *a Sacrifice for Sin*, after the *Hebrew* cuſtom: For we find very oft the words אשם and חטאת to ſignify *a Sin-Offering* as well as Sin: *Lev.* vii. 1, 2. and iv. 28, 29, 33. And this very Apoſtle follows the ſame uſage, expreſſing an *Offering* or *Sacrifice for Sin* by the Phraſe περὶ ἁμαρτίας: *Rom.* viii. 3. *Heb.* x. 6. The *other Side* will have it meant, that Chriſt was made *a Sinner*, but a Sinner that is holy, undefiled, and never offended; which notion of being *made Sin* is too dimunitive, to admit harſh thoughts of ſuch as entertain it.

AN unconcerned Obſerver will be apt to ſay, Theſe who call Chriſt *a Sinner* are intent to renounce *Socinianiſm*; and they who call him *a Sacrifice for Sin*, are as ſollicitous to confute *Socinianiſm* and *Antinomianiſm*

CHAP. VII. *mianiſm* too, by withholding an advantage which both theſe Errors receive by the uſe of that word. But where's the Chriſtian Charity or Prudence of the *condemning Side*, when both contend for what ſeems the beſt defence of the Doctrine of *Satisfaction?* The other Phraſes accounted for in the *Sixth Chapter*, admit the ſame mitigation, as this, and upon the ſame grounds.

III. THE third point wherein there appears ſome difference, refers to the Doctrine of *Juſtification*. But before I inſiſt on this, permit me to offer a few hints.

1. THE Difference in this matter ſeems to proceed from the want of an equal conſideration, of the Covenant of *Redemption*, which fixed the *terms* of Satisfaction, and Impetration of ſaving Benefits, which *Chriſt alone* was thereby obliged to perform; and of the *Goſpel-Covenant*, wherein the method of *giving us* a perſonal Intereſt in the Bleſſings impetrated by Chriſt is ordained. By the *former*, all that belongs to Satisfaction and Merit are confined to *Chriſt*, and Pardon, Adoption, and eternal Life are put in the hand of our Saviour as his Reward. By the *latter*, a way becoming our fallen State and rational Nature is appointed, to *apply to us* a Right to the purchaſed Bleſſings; nor can the Scripture-account of God's Calls, Pleadings, and judicial Proceedings,

ceedings, be explained without it. I think the not distinguishing these *two Covenants*, or fixing the mind upon either of them with too little regard to the other, contribute much to our Debates. CHAP. VII.

2. WITH Humility I propose to consideration, Whether such can *dangerously err* as to the way of Salvation, and particularly in the Doctrine of *Justification*, who do honestly adhere to our foregoing account of Christ's *Satisfaction*; and in subordination thereto, assert a *Gospel-Law* or Covenant, wherein is enacted a Rule by which the saving Effects of that Satisfaction are given forth? It seems to me highly improbable. For in the account given of *Satisfaction*, we ascribe the whole Impetration of Pardon, Acceptance, and all saving Benefits, *only* to the Atonement and Merits of *Christ*, expressly excluding all our own Graces and good Works from the least place therein: And by our Judgment of the *Gospel-Law*, we secure the Method and Rule of the personal *Application* of these merited Benefits, and that conformably to the scope of the Bible in its most explained Parts, as well as in full consistency with an apt Ministry, and a judicial Sentence against impenitent Infidels, to whom those Benefits are not applied, notwithstanding Gospel-offers. Whereas if we conceived never so fitly and with the greatest Soundness concerning the *Satisfaction* of Christ, and denied

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nied a *Gospel-Law*, (or what's *equivalent to it*,) we apprehend no small Danger inevitably to ensue; and that in no less a matter than men's Salvation: For if this Gospel prove a *Rule of Judgment*, and that Christ gives forth Pardon and such merited Benefits thereby, will not our *Ministry* be useless and insnaring to Souls, which doth not explain and press the *Gospel-Conditions* in order to an Interest in those Benefits? And must not those secure Sinners be destroyed, who submit not to those *Conditions*, however confident they be upon Orthodox Apprehensions of what Christ hath done, to satisfy Justice, and merit eternal Life?

THE *Boundaries* therefore I would propose to my self are, that *Christ* be not *rivalled* in his atoning or meriting Performances on the one hand, nor *rejected* in his enacted Rules of dispensing his purchased and offered Benefits on the other; for he is truly dishonoured, and Souls undone by both. But I would not be mistaken, as if this were suggested to reflect on the *Brethren* who are seriously intent upon the *first*; for it already appears, and will be more evident, that they neglect not the *last*, but affirm what to this purpose is *equivalent* to a Gospel-Law.

3. IT is very evident, that when *Protestants* express great Zeal for Christ's *alone Righteousness* imputed to us in Justification, against

againſt the *Popiſh Doctrine*, the generality of the Learned among them do only exclude every thing beſides that Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, from being *meritorious* of Acceptance, Pardon, Life, and any other Bleſſing; and from being any *Satisfaction* or *Compenſation* for any Sin; affirming, that *this alone* can atone the Anger of God, *for the ſake of this alone* will he abſolve us, and *nothing below this* is perfect enough for us to ſtand in before the Bar of his Juſtice: And therefore the *work of Faith it ſelf* can be *no juſtifying Righteouſneſs* in that ſenſe they took juſtifying Righteouſneſs: (All which we heartily own:) And hence they oft appropriate the juſtifying Aptitude and Office of *Faith*, moſtly to a *Reliance* on that ſole meriting Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and its *receiving* Forgiveneſs, Acceptance, and a Right to Life, of mere Mercy, for the ſake of Chriſt's alone Merits. All which is juſtly and truly ſpoken, as they accommodate it to the defence of *Chriſt's Righteouſneſs*, as the only thing appointed or fit for the foredeſcribed Purpoſes, and in oppoſition to the *Popiſh* Doctrine of *Merit*. CHAP. VII.

THE Diſpute they had with the *Popiſh Church* was about this meriting, atoning, ſatisfying Righteouſneſs; and you'll find them often propoſe, that if the *Papiſts* would grant that *this Righteouſneſs* was that *of Chriſt alone*, the great Controverſy

CHAP. VII. about *Juſtification* was at an end: But at the ſame time moſt *Proteſtants*, and our *Homilies* do fully grant, that *Repentance* was neceſſary, and required to Forgiveneſs, and *Faith* to Juſtification, and that theſe Bleſſings are promiſed to thoſe Graces; tho' they were not led to diſpute, Whether theſe were to be called *a Righteouſneſs*, as qualifying the *Subject* on whom God's juſtifying Act terminated; but whether in that Act God regarded any thing as a meriting, abſolving, ſatisfying *Righteouſneſs*, any thing as a *Satisfaction* to Juſtice, any thing as an *impelling* Motive, or valuable Conſideration, *beſides the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt?* To this their Debates were confined in their day, and this they were intent to maintain, as all Chriſtians ought to be: Whereas the reaſon of debating the *Name* of that by which the Subject of Juſtification was determined, in oppoſition to ſuch whom God did not juſtify, was not ſo much before them, as before others, of later years aſſaulted by ſuch as went into another *Extreme* from the Doctrine of *Popiſh Merit*.

NOR was this matter otherwiſe ſtated by our able Divines, who contend againſt ſuch *Arminians* as affirmed the τὸ *credere* to be our juſtifying Righteouſneſs: For by *Righteouſneſs* ſuch *Arminians* mean, the Righteouſneſs which is *part of Payment*, and ſtands in the place of, and anſwers the

ſame

same Ends in our Justification, as perfect Obedience served for to sinless Man; which we have before stated and renounced. Were there need, abundant Testimonies offer by which this Head is easily proved, tho' I grant some Men may be found to vent some *inconsistent* Expressions. CHAP. VII.

HAVING premised these things, I reassume the *Difference* that seems to continue about *Justification*, which lies,

[1.] IN *the manner* of the *Imputation* of Christ's Righteousness. Both agree, it is *imputed*; but *how*, is not so universally assented to.

THE *one Side* think the sense of *imputing Christ's Righteousness* to be, that God reckons *us* to have legally done and suffered what Christ did, and this to the full Satisfaction of Justice and the Law of works; and therefore, that *we* are reputed to have perfectly obeyed the Precepts of this Law, and fully endured its Curse; and for our *legally* doing so, God judgeth and pronounceth us righteous in full Conformity to the Law, and therefore entitled to Pardon, Adoption, and eternal Life. If you ask, Is this *justifying Sentence* the Sentence of the *Law of works*, *viz.* its premiant Sanction applied to us by God as the righteous Judge, judging us by the Law of works? They answer, It is the Sentence of the *Law of works*, but it is of Gospel-Grace that God allowed Christ to be *one*

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Perſon with us in the Covenant of works, whereby we are thus accounted to obey and ſuffer in him.

BUT *others* think, that the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is *imputed* in the following manner, *viz.* (1.) They conſider that the Father *promiſed to Chriſt* in Reward of his Obedience and Suffering, that they who believed on him ſhould be pardoned, adopted, dealt with as righteous Perſons who had not ſinned, and be eternally ſav'd: Hence the *Lord Jeſus* has a Right to Believers obtaining theſe things. And as Faith *deſcribes* the Perſons in this Covenant who ſhall obtain them, ſo when we become *Believers*, we are accounted and adjudged to be ſuch Believers, and ſuch as are to obtain thoſe Bleſſings in Chriſt's Right. (2.) They conſider God in Chriſt, for ſapiential Ends, making in the Goſpel an *Offer* of Pardon, Adoption, and eternal Life to poor Sinners *if they believe*, and promiſing theſe Bleſſings *when they believe*; yet ſtill as Bleſſings *bought* by Chriſt's Obedience and Sufferings, and *promiſed to him* for Believers; tho' withal uſed in his Goſpel as *motives*, to enforce his Command of Faith and his Calls to it. Theſe things thus conſidered, we apprehend, that when God in Chriſt juſtifieth us, he doth not only give us Pardon, Adoption, and Life; but he *adjudgeth* and ſentenceth us to be *the Perſons* who by the Covenant of *Redemption* were

were to be pardoned, adopted, and saved *in the Right of Christ*; and *to whom* the Gospel by its Promise gives *a personal Right* to that Pardon, Adoption, and Life as purchased by Christ: And he esteems and adjudgeth, that the Obedience and Sufferings of Christ in their full virtue, is our *pleadable Security* for the enjoyment of them; whereby we have a Right to *plead* his death and merits with God, as what procured these for us, as well as God's *Fidelity*, who promised them to us in his Gospel. CHAP. VII.

You see by this account, that we rise not so high as to say, *we are accounted* to do and suffer what Christ did, and to be absolved *immediately* by the Sentence of the Law of works; nor do we fall so low, as to intend no more than a mere Participation of the *Effects* of Christ's Righteousness, but assert an *Imputation* of Christ's Righteousness it self *relatively* to those Effects. Christ's Right is applied, and his very Obedience reckoned to us, as what *pleads with God* for those Effects, and secures us against all condemning obstacles and Challenges. The *justifying Sentence* is not the Sentence of the Law; God saith not, "*You* have perfectly *obeyed*, therefore "you shall *live*; *you* have *satisfied* the "Curse, therefore you shall not die:" Yet the *Righteousness* which procured our Salvation, and is adjudged our pleadable

CHAP. VII. Security of enjoying this promiſed Salvation, includes an *Obedience* as perfect as that to which the Law promiſed Life if we had not ſinned, and *Sufferings* equivalent to what the Curſe pronounced againſt us when we ſinned. But becauſe we apprehend not where this Law includes ſuch a Sentence as this, *viz.* "Becauſe *Chriſt* "*obeyed*, *you* ſhall live tho' *you* obeyed "not; and becauſe *Chriſt* who ſinned not, "did *ſuffer* for your Sins, *you* ſhall be "abſolved tho' *you have ſinned*;" therefore we rather conceive the *juſtifying Sentence* to be the Sentence of the *Goſpel-Law*, yet connoting the *Law of mediation*, and preſuppoſing a Satisfaction made to the *Law of works*, which we conceive to be to this purpoſe: "Thou believing Sinner, I ju-"dicially eſteem and pronounce thee *to* "*be one*, that I *promiſed to my Son* in the "Covenant of *Redemption*, to pardon, "adopt, and glorify, in Reward of *his* per-"fect Obedience to my Law, and Satis-"faction to my Juſtice, which I acknow-"ledge he hath performed; as alſo *to be* "*one* of thoſe perſons, to *whom* I made a "Promiſe of Pardon, Adoption, and eter-"nal Glory, when I *offer'd* theſe Bleſ-"ſings to all Sinners who *would believe on* "*him*: Thou art therefore, in the virtue "of the Promiſe made to Chriſt, and the "Promiſe made to thee, adjudged *to re-*"*ceive* Forgiveneſs, Adoption, and Glory,

"and

" and *to have a Right to plead* the Righ- CHAP.
" teouſneſs of Chriſt for thy ſafe and com- VII.
" fortable Enjoyment of them in the pre-
" vailing efficacy of his Merits, *who alone*
" *procured* both theſe Bleſſings, and that
" *Faith* upon which thy *Eſtate* is ſo much
" altered." Charity obligeth me to think, that ſome well-meaning Perſons who talk of *eternal Juſtification* in Chriſt, intend no more than *this Promiſe* made to Chriſt in the Covenant of *Redemption:* And by not diſtinguiſhing between this Promiſe, that *all who ſhould believe on him* ſhould be juſtified, and that other Article, that *all the Elect ſhall believe on him*, (which is a diſtinct thing,) they conſider not, that by the *firſt* no man can be juſtified *till he be a Believer*; and the *laſt* Article only aſſures, that *the Elect will be Believers*, and by the Conſequence of the *firſt* that they ſhall all be juſtified, but yet *not before* they are Believers. In what is promiſed to Chriſt, *Iſa.* liii. 10, 11. *He ſhall ſee his Seed*, and *by his Knowledge* (or by Faith in him) *he ſhall juſtify many*, are not the ſame thing: The *former* aſcertains, that the Elect ſhall believe; the *latter*, that they ſhall be juſtified *when* they believe: Nor could it be otherwiſe, even when Chriſt upon the *Croſs* paid that, for the ſake of which theſe Promiſes were made to him. He muſt then purſuant to the Compact *die*, that Believers might be *juſtified*, and the Elect

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become *Believers*; otherwise the Articles of the Covenant of *Redemption* must be altered, and not direct his engaged Performances and Rewards. Nor can I chuse but wonder, to see our Divines in their Dispute against the *Papists* proving that *Justification* is a *forensick* or judicial Act; and yet, to find many using *terms* so *improper* to such an Act, and omitting, yea condemning, those which are *proper*.

BUT to digress no further: You see what is *this part* of the difference about *Justification:* Yet remember, *our Brethren* do not say, that we our selves did *personally* obey or suffer, or are reputed so to do, but that we are reputed to have done it *in Christ*, who was one legal Person with us in the account of the Law: Nor do they deny the *Pardon of Sin*, but own it, whatever others think of the difficulty of reconciling such things: They deny also, that we can be said to *satisfy in Christ*, tho' we died in him, or that we *merited in him*, tho' he merited. Further, there is *no difference* about the *Effects* of the imputed Righteousness of Christ, nor yet about the *Righteousness it self* as including both his *active* and *passive* Obedience, nor about the *time* of its Imputation, *viz.* when we believe.

AND shall we *condemn each other*, notwithstanding this Agreement in almost every thing besides the *manner* of Imputation,

tion, and this with relation to what God accounts *us* to have done *in Chriſt*, and not as to what *Chriſt* hath done *for us*? Shall men *rend each other*, becauſe one thinks, there *can be no Imputation* beyond what he grants; the other ſuſpects, it is *not an Imputation* unleſs it be in his words; and yet both grant *an Imputation* effectually available to *all* the ſame real Purpoſes, *viz.* the honour of Chriſt and Grace, the accompliſhment of God's Decree, and the acceptance and ſalvation of Believers as if they had never been unrighteous, with ground of believing hopes about it equally ſtrong and quieting?

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[2.] THE other *Point* undecided is, what *Title* or *Name* we ſhould give to *that Faith*, which is required in the Perſon on whom God's juſtifying Act doth terminate.

OUR *Brethren* ſcruple our calling it *a Qualification*, *a Condition*, or *a Righteouſneſs*. But *others of us* think, that each of theſe may properly be aſcribed to it. — It may be called *a Qualification*, as it diſtinguiſheth *one man* deſcribed by the Word, which declares who ſhall be juſtified, from *another* who, according to the Rule of the Word, and the Incongruity of the thing, is not to be juſtified, unleſs the divine Perfections and the methods of Grace ſhould be reflected on; for by the Goſpel-Rule, he that *hath not Faith* is to abide *under*

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der wrath. And how unbecoming and of ill Consequence would it be, to entitle a man to Glory, and receive him to favour for Christ's sake, while he rejecteth Christ, and is resolved to tread under foot his Blood; tho' it is from God's *Promise*, and not from any *Merit of Congruity*, that the Accepter of Christ should be justified?—They call it also *a Condition*, not to signify any *Merit* or *Compensation*, which they abhor; but to connote God's *Offers* of these Blessings to *more* than do accept of them, as also a Divine *Authority* enjoining a Compliance with the terms on which the Blessings are offered, tho' that be no more than a *meet Acceptance*.—And to shew the *manner* of God's conferring them upon that Acceptation, they think it may be called *a Gospel-Righteousness*; not as *meritorious* of the Blessing, no, nor a *full Conformity* to the Gospel-precept; but as it is the *performed Condition* of the offered Benefit, according to the tenor of the Gospel-promise, which always supposes Christ's *Satisfaction*, and his paying the impetrating *Price* of all such offered Blessings. And they are more induced to account the performed Condition *a Gospel-Righteousness*, because the Gospel so very often speaks of a *subjective Righteousness in us*, and denominates *imperfect* men *righteous* so expressly with respect to that Righteousness: They also think, that this cannot be from *Obedience* to

to the *Law of works* unless it were *perfect*, which it is not; nor yet from *full Obedience* to the *Precepts* of the Gospel, which enjoin no less as a *Duty* than doth the Law it self: Therefore they can find no ground of that *Denomination*, besides a conformity to what the Gospel-promise appointeth as a *Condition* of the Good it entitles a person to; yet still as a means of *giving us* in a way of *governing Grace*, what was *promised to Christ* for us, as a Reward of his full Satisfaction to *Legal Justice*. CHAP. VII.

BUT *our Brethren* think these Terms too high, and prefer calling Faith *an Instrument*, as many *Protestants* do, who also call it *a Condition*: Some chuse to call it *a Means*, I suppose to note a *physical* Influence, in opposition to what's *moral* and expressive of any Law: Both which, by the way, we apprehend an ascribing much more to *Faith*, than we dare; because it makes *Faith* efficacious, from its *natural* aptitude and activity, without a divine *Ordination* of it to that end by any *Promise*.

THE Reason of any Debate concerning these Expressions, lies in this: *Our Brethren* consider all the Gospel-Duties and Benefits as a mere physical *Order* of Blessings decreed by God to the Elect; and so one is given *before* the other, according as the Gospel describeth that Order. *We* grant the said *Order*, and should insist on no

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no more, were not the Benefits *offered to more* beſides the Elect, and ſtill *uſed as Motives* to induce men to ſubmit to thoſe Duties; and this, by *Promiſes* of the Benefits *if* the required Duties be performed, and *Threatnings* of withholding the Benefits with additional Miſery to be inflicted *if* they be not performed, with an account of *judicial Proceedings* towards men with reſpect to their performance or non-performance of the ſaid *official Terms*: But things being thus, and ſo very apparently the Indications of *governing methods*; and the aptitude of our *Miniſtry* for Converſion and Perſeverance ſo much depending upon the affecting of men's *hopes* and *fears*; we are forced to own, that the *Goſpel* is not *only a deſcription* of the foreſaid *Order*, but that it is *a Law of Grace* ſubordinate to the Covenant of *Redemption.*

YET that none may ſuſpect the *difference* above what it is, I ſhall recite what *our Brethren* grant in their *Declaration.* They ſay, *pag.* 13. "We are made *true* "*Owners of Juſtification*, at that Inſtant "when we *firſt believe.*" And *pag.* 15. "It muſt be ſaid, that even *in foro Dei*, "in God's Court, and according to the "Judgment of that *open Court* which "God hath ſet up in *his Word*, and ac-"cording to the Proceedings of *his Word*, "(which is *the Rule* he profeſſeth to judge "men by, and therein he keeps to the "*Rule*

" *Rule* of his *Word*; as Christ saith, *I* CHAP.
" *judge no man*; *but the Word which I* VII.
" *speak, shall judge you*; *John* xii. 47,
" 48.) God doth *judge* and *pronounce* his
" Elect *ungodly* and *unjustified*, till *they*
" *believe*." All these are the words of Dr. *Goodwin*, which they approve of: And note, that in *vol.* ii. *of the Creatures, lib.* 2. *cap.* 7. *pag.* 51, to 63. he proves at large, that Faith in Christ is of *another kind* than the Faith required by the *Law of works*. They also say, *pag.* 46. " God in the *Co-*
" *venant of Grace* freely *offereth unto Sin-*
" *ners* Life and Salvation by Jesus Christ,
" *requiring of them* Faith in him, that
" they may be saved." Note, the *Assembly* of Divines at *Westminster*, in their *larger Catech. Qu.* 32. expres it, " *re-*
" *quiring Faith* as the *Condition* to interest
" them in Christ." And in their *shorter Catech. Qu.* 85. we are told, " To escape
" the Wrath and Curse of God due to us
" for Sin, God *requireth* Faith in Jesus
" Christ, Repentance unto Life, *&c.*" And in the *Savoy Confession*, as well as theirs, *Chap.* xviii. §. 2. " The true Believer's *Cer-*
" *tainty of Salvation* is not a bare con-
" jectural and probable Persuasion, ground-
" ed upon a fallible hope; but an infalli-
" ble *Assurance of Faith*, founded upon
" the Divine Truth of the Promises of
" Salvation, the inward Evidence of *those*
" *Graces* unto which these Promises are
" made,

CHAP. VII. " made, *&c.*" Of all which *our Brethren* have approved. To add no more, they declare *pag.* 47. It's an *Error*, " that con-
" tinued Repentance and Holineſs *are not*
" in the nature of the thing, nor by the
" Conſtitution of the Goſpel, *neceſſary* to
" our being poſſeſſed of eternal Life:"
And may it not be ſuppoſed, that *nor* is put for *and?* and that by what is called *neceſſary by the Conſtitution of the Goſpel*, as diſtinguiſhed from *neceſſary in the nature of the thing*, ſome of them may mean *an authoritative* or *rectoral* Conſtitution? that is, this Order is appointed by Chriſt as our *Ruler*, wherein he hath *enacted* this Connection, and *requireth* our Compliance.

THESE things being put together, muſt acquit *our Brethren* from the imputation of rendering Faith, Repentance, or Holineſs, *needleſs* or uſeleſs to Salvation, tho' they ſcruple to call it *a Goſpel-Righteouſneſs:* And we hope it may incline them to a Forbearance towards us, who think theſe Conceſſions contain for ſubſtance all that we intend by the terms, *Condition*, and *Goſpel-Righteouſneſs*; which we make uſe of, as what do more exactly, comprehenſively, and to ſome purpoſes more ſafely, expreſs what we conceive to be the true import of theſe Paſſages when connected, and of which therefore we approve.

YET to put things in a fuller Light, I ſhall repreſent the matter as it ſtands by the

the forecited Paſſages; (to all which they declare their Aſſent, *pag.* 64.) The *Brethren* affirm, that God in his Covenant *offering* Life and Salvation to *Sinners*, and *requiring* Faith in him that they may be ſaved, *this Faith* in a Mediator is *commanded* by the *Goſpel*, (and not by the Law of works, as Dr. *Goodwin* ſaith,) with *Goſpel-Promiſes* of an Intereſt in Chriſt and his Benefits; and theſe are *made to this Faith*, (as a *Condition*, ſay the *Aſſembly* of Divines;) and this, in ſuch a manner, that the Believer may have an *infallible Aſſurance* of the Benefits upon an inward evidence of his having *this Faith*, as that Grace *to which the Promiſe was made*, wherein the ſaid Benefits were included: And alſo, that this Goſpel includes that *Word*, which is the *Rule of Judgment*, by which Rule God judgeth that man (tho' *Elect*,) who hath not this Faith, to be a *Chriſtleſs*, unpardoned *Child of wrath*; and him who *hath* this Faith, to be a true *Owner* of Chriſt and Pardon: Alſo, that *Repentance* is of ſuch *neceſſity* to all Sinners, that this, as well as Faith, is *required* that they may eſcape, and *none* may expect to be pardoned *in a ſtate* of unbelief and impenitence; yea, *continued* Repentance and Holineſs are *neceſſary* to our poſſeſſion of eternal Life: And all this is declared to be *neceſſary*, not only from the nature

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nature of the thing, but alſo *by the Conſtitution* of the Goſpel.

THIS Account, I apprehend, is ſo *equivalent* to a *Goſpel-Law of Grace* for all its great purpoſes, that I ſhall not be offended at what name they pleaſe to give it: And did not a Fear of offending them prevent me, I would prove it to be *all the Law of Grace* which we aſſert; eſpecially if they would allow, that when they ſay *God requireth Faith*, that Sinners under Offers of Life may be ſaved, it's *upon his Throne* (tho' a Throne of Grace,) that God in Chriſt requireth it, and from thence directs his Offers of Salvation to Sinners; and thence *ſentenceth* them who live under Goſpel-Offers, by their aſſerted *Rule of Judgment*.

HOWEVER, we have no reaſon to contend; eſpecially when both agree, that the Debate is about the *Inſtrument of Donation*, and the *Qualification* of the Subject to receive a *Gift*; and not about any thing that *meriteth the Gift*, freely beſtowed on God's part, and thankfully and humbly received on our part. A low degree of Charity would make allowance on both hands, when the Difference is ſo minute. *They* ſeem jealous of the honour of *Free-Grace*, (yet owning Chriſt's Merits:) *We* are for *Free-Grace*, in oppoſition to all *Merits* beſides Chriſt's, but not excluſively of all *governing Methods* in applying the effects of Free-

Free-Grace. *They* grant, that *Faith* in Chriſt is *required*, that we may be ſaved: *We* more expreſsly ſay, it's by a *rectoral* Authority. *They* grant, it is ſo by the Law of works: *We* ſay, it's by a poſitive *Goſpel-Law*, tho' we grant when this *poſitive Law* requireth it, we are obliged alſo by the general *Law of Nature* to yield Obedience; yet not by the *Law of works*, as ſpecified by *Adam*'s Covenant, which Faith in Chriſt was inconſiſtent with from the eſſential nature of that Covenant. *Our Brethren* are watchful againſt any *inherent Righteouſneſs* of man *mingling* with Chriſt's Righteouſneſs: *We*, beſides avoiding of that, are ſolicitous leſt men come ſhort of Salvation by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, through a neglect of *what he requireth* in all thoſe who ſhall be ſaved by it; and yet we declare againſt all things beſides *Chriſt's Righteouſneſs*, to be any impetrating, ſatisfying, atoning, meriting or compenſating Righteouſneſs; and as *Faith* hath no ſhare or place in this Office, ſo *Chriſt's Righteouſneſs*, tho' the ſole meritorious Cauſe, is not *that* which God by the Goſpel *requires of Sinners* that they may be ſaved by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt; *Faith* is that *commanded Requiſite*, and no more than that; its place is thereto confined; and therefore here is *no mingling* of our Righteouſneſs with Chriſt's, becauſe their uſe, place, and offices be ſo very diſtinct.

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THEY ſeem moſt afraid of *Popery* and *Arminianiſm*; and therefore keep to this ſenſe of being *juſtified by Faith* alone, *viz.* we are juſtified *only by Chriſt believed on*, or the Object of Faith only is imputed to us for Righteouſneſs. *We* are truly afraid of *Popery* and *Arminianiſm*, but not *only* of theſe, but of *Antinomianiſm* too; and therefore are intent to maintain *two great Truths* included in that one Sentence, *We are juſtified by Faith*; viz.

(1.) THAT the Believer is abſolved from Guilt, accepted into God's Favour, and entitled to eternal Life, *in and for Chriſt's Righteouſneſs*; and neither *Faith*, nor any Grace or Act of ours, makes the leaſt *Recompence* to God, or is the leaſt *Price* or *Merit* of Pardon or Life, or any *Motive* inclining divine Juſtice to *promiſe* or *accept* us into his favour, or to treat us *as righteous Perſons*. This from our heart we own; and know, that this is what ſound *Proteſtants* intended by it againſt the *Papiſts*. Yet as God *promiſed to Chriſt* in the Covenant of *Redemption*, that all Believers ſhould be abſolv'd, *&c.* ſo in the *Goſpel-Offer* of his Grace to Sinners, he *promiſed to Men*, that he would *in and for the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt*, abſolve, accept, treat as righteous Perſons, and give eternal Life (already purchaſed by Chriſt,) to *every true Believer*; commanding Sinners to *believe*, and threatning that if they *believed not*,

not, they ſhould *remain condemned*, yea become ſubject to *ſorer puniſhments*; and that he would *judge* them by this *Goſpel-Rule of Judgment*. Whence we are attentive to a *ſecond Truth*, viz. CHAP. VII.

(2.) THAT God accepteth and accounteth *Faith* to be a *performed Condition* of this Goſpel-Covenant, and upon it acquits the Sinner from the *Charge* of damning Infidelity; and adjudgeth the Believer, *qua* ſuch, in oppoſition to Infidels, to be, in *Chriſt's Right*, and by his *Goſpel-Promiſe*, entitled to a *preſent perſonal Intereſt* in the foreſaid Abſolution, Acceptance, and Gift of eternal Life; yet as *procured* by Chriſt's Righteouſneſs *alone*, and applied for his ſake.

To add no more, *our Brethren* in the Doctrine of *Juſtification* almoſt confine their Regards to the *Satisfaction of Chriſt*, wherein Chriſt tranſacted with the provoked Juſtice of God: *We*, beſides that, conſider a propitiated God in Chriſt *applying* the effects of his Redemption to men in a Method of *governing Grace*; but without any real difference in the Doctrine of *Satisfaction*; and withal ſincerely granting *the Condition is performed* in the Strength of Chriſt *freely* diſpenſed. Yet upon the whole, *they* provide againſt carnal *Security*, and *we* againſt carnal *Boaſting*: And as *they* are far from deſigning to eclipſe the Glory of Chriſt, as *King*,

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Lawgiver. and *Judge*; ſo *we* are as far from intending the diminution of his Glory, as a *Prieſt.* How unreaſonable and unhappy therefore would *perpetuated Conteſts* be, where the Grounds pretended are of ſo little weight?

THUS I have inſiſted on what ſeems moſt like a Difference, in the Doctrine of *Satisfaction* and *Juſtification.* Some weak perſons may think there is a great Controverſy, where I ſee nothing worth our notice. They will ſay, Some think, that we are *juſtified* by *one Act* of Faith, *viz. Reliance.* Well, but they ſay, juſtifying Faith is *receiving Chriſt*, &c. as well as a Reliance. *Ay*, but a man *ſees* only with his *Eye*, tho' more is of the Eſſence of a man: But I ſay, no man *ſees* without that which is of the *Eſſence* of his Eye.— Again, ſome think, that *juſtifying Faith* as ſuch *receives Chriſt* only *as a Prieſt*; while others ſay, it receives him alſo *as a King* and *Prophet*: Yet the *laſt* ſay, the convinced Sinner hath *a ſpecial reſpect* to Chriſt's *Prieſthood*, as moſt agreeable to his preſent caſe; and the *former* will ſay, it's but an *hypocritical Faith*, that receives not Chriſt as *Prophet* and *King* as well as *Prieſt:* Nay, it's not the true Chriſt, the *anointed Meſſias*, who is received, unleſs it be as Prophet, King, and Prieſt, even *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.*---Ay, but ſome ſay,

say, *Repentance is an effect of Justification:* But there be very few of our *Congregational Brethren* of that mind; and I suppose, they mean *Works meet for Repentance*, and not a Change of the purpose of the heart. CHAP. VII.

NAY, but several say, *Faith alone is the Instrument of Justification*; while others *make Repentance the Condition of Forgiveness.* What then? seeing the *first* grant, there is no justifying Faith *without Repentance*; and the *last* grant, the *aptitude of Faith* to receive and acknowledge Christ (which I suppose they mean by *Instrument*,) is far greater than Repentance. But when both Sides consider *Faith* as an *ordained Condition* as well as an *Instrument*, they'll scarce dispute, but that *Repentance* is a *Condition of Pardon* as well as Faith; unless they would agree to join them together, by calling Faith *a penitent Faith*, or Repentance *a believing Repentance*; connoting at once a Sinner's purpose to *return to God* by Christ the Mediator, and his *closing with Christ the Mediator*, that he may return to God by him: Tho' I think the end is first agreed to, before the way or means to that end is resolved on or made use of.

Obj. BUT sure there is a vast difference, between those who think we are *justified by Faith only*, and those who think we are *justified by Works* as well as by Faith.

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Answ. 1. NOT so very great; when both mean, that we are *justified* neither by Faith nor Works, as the word *justified* is commonly taken: For both agree, that we are absolved, accepted as righteous, and entitled to eternal Life, *only* for Christ's death and obedience, as the only meriting, satisfactory, and atoning Righteousness.

2. THEY who say, it's *by Faith alone* that *we apply* this Righteousness, do also grant, that Faith is *not alone* in the person to whom *God applies* the Righteousness of Christ; and when they apply it to themselves, Repentance, Love, *&c.* are *concomitants* with Faith. And they who think, we are *justified by Works*, as they think it is *God's applying* Christ's Righteousness to us, and not *our applying it* to our selves, that is the great *justifying Act*; so they grant, that God justifieth us *as soon* as we repent and believe with the heart, and doth not *suspend* a justified State, till *Works meet for Repentance* or the *Effects of Faith* are produced; yea, should a man die then, he would be certainly saved.

3. THEY who say, it's *by Faith alone*, acknowledge, that *justifying Faith* will certainly produce *good Works*; and if good Works and persevering Holiness do not follow, it was a *dead Faith*; and because *dead*, it never was a *justifying Faith*, however men flatter'd themselves: Also, that men's *Faith*, tho' not their Persons, is justified

fied *by their Works*: Yea, the most Judi- CHAP. cious own, that if Sin should reign in Be- VII. lievers, and they *apostatize*, they would be *condemned*; (tho' the Promise of *Perseverance* make that impossible;) and therefore persevering Holiness and good Works so far *continue* their Justification, as they prevent what would bring them into Condemnation; and *Faith* is the *Condition* of the continuation of Justification. See Dr. *Owen of Justification*, pag. 207, 208, 306. On the other hand, they who say, we are *justified by Works*, do account *Works* to be no more but the *executing* the federal *consenting* Act of Faith; and so it's *Faith* exerting it self by various occasions: And considering, that the Believer's not only forgiving his Enemies, but his persevering in Faith and Holiness, are plain *Conditions* in many *Promises* made thereto; and God pronounceth to Believers, that he will have *no pleasure* in any Man who draweth back, and *he shall die* if Sin reigneth in him; (*Heb.* x. 38. *Rom.* viii. 13. *Mat.* vi. 14, 15.) they conceive, that by *Perseverance* in Faith and true Holiness, they are kept from being *chargeable* with final and total Apostacy, and from *obnoxiousness* to the Evils denounced by the Gospel against *Apostates* as such, and are adjudged to be under the Influence and Safeguard of the *Promises* made to Believers as *persevering*. Nevertheless they abhor a thought, that

CHAP. VII. *Perſeverance* in Faith and Holineſs, or any *good Work*, is any *meriting Righteouſneſs*, or the leaſt Compenſation for Sin, or entitling Price of the leaſt Benefit: Nor do they exclude the need of multiplied and continued *Pardon*, or make any Bleſſing *due of Debt*; but they rely *wholly* on Chriſt's Merits for theſe things, as the only procuring Cauſe; tho' they are *affected* and *governed* by theſe places of God's Word, which are directed to Believers as part of his *Rule of Judgment*; well knowing, that whatever Sentence is paſſed by the ſaid Word in this Life, God executes it now in part, and more at Death; but at the great Day it will be *ſolemnly* pronounced, and *perfectly* executed.

THESE reſpective Conceſſions duly weighed, ſecure thoſe who ſay we are *juſtified by Faith alone* from the danger of *Licentiouſneſs*; and thoſe who ſay we are *juſtified by Works* alſo, from detracting from the honour of *Chriſt's Righteouſneſs*, as having the *ſole* meriting, atoning Virtue and Efficacy in *Juſtification*; and do not only grant *Perſeverance*, but think theſe conditional Promiſes and Comminations are apt and *deſigned* means of it, in Subjects capable of moral Government, and whoſe Warfare is unaccompliſhed.

HOWEVER ſuch *different Sentiments* may appear to others, I lay ſo little ſtreſs upon them, that I had not thought it worth my

my labour to have printed a Sheet against any man, who confessed the *necessity* of *saving Faith* (as described in the Gospel) to *Justification*, (Repentance and Love still accompanying that Faith, in the Object on whom God's justifying Act doth terminate,) and the *uneffectualness* of *Faith* to save any who neglected to perform *good Works*, and to persevere in Faith and Holiness. Such as granted but these things, I had never wrote against for scrupling the *conditional* respect of them to the *Gospel-Law*. But Dr. *Crisp*'s Notions I apprehended dangerous; and they so greatly prevailing, my Brethren thought my confuting them necessary at that time; whereas I had no purpose, when I wrote against Dr. *Crisp*, to intermeddle with these other points: But some *Congregational Brethren* in their Attempts against my Book, did from a very few occasional Expressions therein, accuse us of *Socinianism*, *Arminianism*, and *Popery*; and that they might have some pretence to fix that Charge, they turned the Controversy into these lesser Matters, whereby I was *necessitated* either to insist on them, (however against my Will,) or else to abide under the foresaid severe Imputation, to the prejudice not only of my own Ministry, but also of most of my Brethren. CHAP. VII.

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An Attempt to accommodate the Difference, between such as say Christ's Righteousness *is imputed only* as to Effects, *and not* in se; *and those of us who think it is imputed* in se.

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FORESEEING an *Objection*, that will be improved against a peaceable Forbearance towards a number, however small, and that Rigidness may include in that number whomever the Objectors shall disaffect, it's of use to state it.

Object. GRANTING the forementioned Points to be reduced *below a Cause of Dissention*, yet the Difference cannot be compromised, between such as say the Righteousness of Christ *is imputed* [*in se*] for Justification, and them who say it is *not imputed* [*in se*,] but only *quoad effectus*.

Answ. I THINK it may be accommodated; at least so far, as to cut off just Pretences for hereticating and dividing from each other: To which end I will consider these several Opinions, and then reduce the difference.

First,

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First, AMONG them who say, Christ's Righteousness *is imputed* [*in se*,] there be two Opinions most noted, and whereto all others are reducible: Of both these I have already treated so much, that little more is needful.

[1.] THERE are *some* who think, that the Elect are judicially, according to the *Law of works*, accounted to have done and suffered *in Christ* all that the Law demanded, both as the Punishment of Sin, and the Merit of eternal Life. Such must hold, that Christ's death and obedience are the *formal Righteousness* of the Elect, and the *formal Cause* of Justification, and that from the first moment of their personal Subsistence; yea, and (except making Christ to be their Representative,) without any *Gift* of that Righteousness, it being *imputed* not of Grace, but *of legal Justice*, as *Adam*'s Obedience had been if he had finally obeyed, and his Offence now is upon his sinning.

THERE are *others*, who are for this judicial reckoning Sinners to obey and suffer *in Christ*; but they hold, they are not adjudged to have done this, *till they are Believers*; and then, they are *legally just* before God, and as such entitled to eternal Life. These speak more *safely*, but less *consistently*; they limit the Time, from a conviction that the whole scope of the Gospel must be contradicted, if Unbelievers

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lievers do not *remain* condemned, and Believers *only* are justified. But yet it seems hard, to apprehend, that God by the *Law of Works* accounts the *Person of a Believer* to have *suffered in Christ*, and therefore to be absolved; whom yet he did not account to *suffer in Christ* while he was an *Unbeliever*, and therefore condemned him, and this by that very same Law which now acquits him. I know, to make this consist, it's offered, that the Elect are not *Christ's Seed* till they become *Believers*. But this comes short; for it will thence follow, that Christ in his death was a strict Representative, who personated Believers. [*qua*] *Believers*, which will induce ill Consequences: And yet further, it is not true, that the Persons of Believers were *seminally in Christ*, when he died, as we were *in Adam* when he sinned; and so no Argument can be brought from that Instance. I grant, that both the *Merit*, and the powerful *Virtue* whereby our Persons in time obtain Faith, were *in Christ* before we were born; but that makes not Christ *the Root* of our *Persons* at that time, but of that regenerating *Virtue* whereby we become Believers: And therefore, tho' as to this change of our *Qualification* we may be called *Christ's Seed* when we believe, yet it's not such a Seed, as that it may be said of us, we *suffered in him*, as we *sinned in Adam*, who was the *natural Root* of

of our Persons, and thereupon such a Representative as his Descendents sinned in. What may be said of Christ's *adopting Merit*, will have no place here; for these Authors make *Adoption* to be an *Effect* of Justification, and so the *Imputation* is prior. CHAP. VIII.

[2.] THERE be others, who are for *imputed Righteousness* [*in se*,] but cannot approve of the former manner of *Imputation*; among whom there is some variety in wording their Conceptions, but they come to one and the same thing, *viz.* That God adjudgeth the *Believer* to be one, whose Absolution, Adoption, and Glory were *promised to Christ* in Reward of his death and obedience by the Covenant of *Redemption*; (which are promised also to the *Believer himself* in the Gospel-Covenant;) and for his actual interest and enjoyment thereof, as also his acceptance and treatment *as a righteous Person* against all Challenges, God judicially accounts what Christ hath done and suffered to be *his pleadable Security*: This we take to be *Imputation*.

Secondly, As to the Opinion of those who say, Christ's Righteousness *is not imputed* [*in se*,] but only *as to Effects*; they in expressions oppose all the forementioned Account, denying that the *first* Head is true, and that the *second* is any *Imputation*

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tion of Christ's Righteousness *in se*: Nevertheless they grant, that *Christ's Righteousness* is the *meritorious Cause* of our Justification by Faith, and seem to insist mostly upon its Efficacy to that end; as *Christ's Satisfaction* was the ground upon which God enacted the Gospel-Covenant, wherein our *Faith*, tho' imperfect, *is accounted for Righteousness*. Concerning this Opinion I shall offer a few things.

[1.] NONE ought to narrow it, as if the Authors meant, that Pardon and eternal Life are *not merited* by the Righteousness of Christ; for they affirm, that these and other *Gospel-Blessings* are *merited by Christ*, as well as the Gospel-Covenant. Pray say not this; for it's not only the Covenant it self, but *those very Blessings* which that Covenant conveys, that are the *merited Effects* of Christ's death and obedience; they were *his deserved Rewards*, which are dispensed to us upon believing. This I insert, to obviate a Conceit too much improved by some, (so stupid, or worse, that they will not own this Distinction,) who still cry out against those of this Opinion, as if they confined the Influence of Christ's Righteousness to the *procuring of a Law* whereby men were to purchase Pardon and Life by their own Faith: Whereas they are so far from this, that they affirm *these Blessings* were already accounted *purchased*, and Authority

in

in Christ to dispense them, before he could enact such a Law. CHAP. VIII.

[2.] THEY intend not to exclude *Christ's Righteousness* from being *imputed* in any sense; for they say it's imputed *quoad effectus*, and therefore should not be charged to *deny all Imputation*, or represented to say, we are pardoned and saved *for our own Works*, without *any Imputation* of Christ's Death and obedience at all.

[3.] IN all which they affirm concerning *Justification*, they still suppose Christ's *compleat Satisfaction*, and are *sound* therein: None can accuse them to differ from the *Orthodox*, as to Christ's expiating Sacrifice, or Impetration of eternal Life.

[4.] I COULD wish a very worthy Person of this Opinion would review his own account of *Justification*; wherein he saith, "It is *that Act*, whereby God *im-* "*putes* to every sound Believer *his Faith* "*for Righteousness* upon the account of "*Christ's Satisfaction and Merits*, and gives "*Pardon and Life* as the *Benefits of it*," that is, *of Justification*; which he further explicates, "Through Christ's Sacrifice *the* "*defects of this Faith*, which is our Righ- "teousness, *are pardoned*, and by his Me- "rits *that imperfect Duty* is accounted or "*imputed to us for Righteousness*, which "it is not in it self." Had I thus stated this Point, I should ask my self, Do not I set *Pardon* too remote from Christ's Sacrifice

CHAP. VIII. crifice as the meritorious Cauſe? And how can *Pardon* be the *Effect* of imputing Faith for Righteouſneſs, (which is *Juſtification*,) and yet God cannot impute Faith for Righteouſneſs unleſs he firſt *pardon its defects* for the ſake of Chriſt's Sacrifice? But the cauſe of my mentioning this Account follows.

[5.] THEY do affirm what amounts to a *real Imputation* of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs *in Se*; at leaſt what ſuppoſeth *this Imputation*, and infers it to be *neceſſary*. For how by Chriſt's Merits can *a Righteouſneſs* in it ſelf *imperfect* be reckoned before a juſt God for our *perfect Righteouſneſs*, and yet thoſe Merits, for which it is ſo reckoned, *not be imputed* at all *for Righteouſneſs* to us who have that Faith? Would Faith be *no Righteouſneſs*, except the Divine Mind did apply the Merits of Chriſt to Faith to *make it a Righteouſneſs*, upon which I am accounted *righteous* by this Faith; and yet the Divine Mind not apply to me *that Righteouſneſs of Chriſt*, without which my Faith left me ſtill *unrighteous?* whereas it ſeems undeniable, as far as Chriſt's Righteouſneſs is *neceſſary* to make my perſonal Faith *my Righteouſneſs* in God's account, that ſame very Righteouſneſs is *neceſſary* to make *my Perſon righteous* in God's account.---Moreover, they own, that God *promiſed to Chriſt* in reward of his meriting Sufferings and Obedience, that

that all Believers should be absolved and glorified: And can they be *adjudged* to this Absolution and Glory, without a *judicial* acknowledgment that they are to be absolved and glorified *in that Right of Christ* which resulted from that Promise made to him? And can that be, without an *Imputation* of those Sufferings and Obedience of Christ, which are rewarded *in that Right of Christ*, and thereby *in those Blessings* wherein Believers have this judicially acknowledged Interest?—They also abhor a thought, that *our Faith* can be presented to God as any Righteousness in *Satisfaction* to Justice, *Atonement* for our Sin, or the meriting *Price* of our Salvation: And withal they grant, there must be such a Righteousness; and that this was *Christ's Righteousness*, by which our Sins are satisfied for, we receive the Atonement, are reconciled, and obtain the Salvation so purchased. Now is it possible, that things should stand thus, and Christ's Righteousness *not be imputed* to us? Can our righteous Judge declare himself satisfied, atoned, and reconciled to us Sinners for the Righteousness of Christ, and *not impute to us* that Righteousness *in se*, as what he accounts a Plea for us in his account? Can we enjoy the *merited Effects* of Christ's Death, and that Death not be reckoned what secures to us those Effects, against the Challenges which the *Merits* of

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it were designed to answer ?---Finally, Do not these Divines oft *rest on* and plead with God *the Merits of Christ*, more immediately and directly than a denial of *Imputation* will admit? when they *rest on* Christ's Righteousness, and *plead* it with God for Pardon; (tho' it's true we could not expect Pardon for it, were not Pardon promised for the sake thereof.) I think their Minds oft act more directly and fully towards the Righteousness of Christ, than to intend it thus, *viz.* "I trust in Christ's "*Merits* for Pardon, as that Pardon is "the *effect* of that Justification wherein "*our Faith* is accounted through Christ's "Satisfaction *a Righteousness* according to "the *Gospel-Covenant*; which Covenant was "procured by the Merits of Christ's Death."

I GRANT, there may be use of this progressive manner of arriving at Christ's Death for support of our Faith, as we confine its regards to the *Gospel-Covenant*, and examine our Interest thereby as a Rule of Judgment. But I humbly think, that when we plead with God for Pardon for the sake of Christ's Merits, we have a more direct Eye to the *Covenant of Redemption*, wherein a Pardon was promised to Christ for Believers in reward of his Death; and which the Gospel distinctly expresseth in this, *viz.* That Pardon is granted *for the sake* of Christ's Death, as what procured it *in se*, as well as what merited the *Gospel-Covenant*,

Covenant, which is the Instrument of the donation of it. And so by keeping our eye on the *Covenant of Redemption*, we plead Christ's Right as more *immediately* imputable; and by keeping our thoughts on the *Gospel-Connection* between Pardon and Christ's Death as the procuring Merit of it, we plead Christ's very Performances *mediately* imputed, *viz.* as our *pleadable Security* for our certain obtaining and safe enjoying the said Forgiveness. CHAP. VIII.

[6.] THE Reasons why these venerable Persons are so intent to deny an *Imputation* of Christ's Righteousness *in se*, are, (1.) An apprehension that there's no such *Imputation*, unless *we* are accounted by God to have done and suffered what Christ did; which would unavoidably introduce the *Antinomian* Scheme, as most consistent. But this I deny to be the only import of that Phrase; for when that Righteousness *it self* is imputed *relatively* to the special Effects of it, it's truly an Imputation of it *in se*. And whereas they of the other Extreme say, that its being a *pleadable Security* for our Pardon, is but an *Effect*; I answer, This Righteousness *it self* being that Security, is indeed an Effect of the Compact between the Father and the Son; yet it is not *this Effect* is imputed, but the Righteousness *it self*, as such: And by the same Rule, as they can deny it to be imputed *in se*, because it's

CHAP. VIII. imputed as a *pleadable Security*, they may better say, Its being imputed for Justification, and for Atonement, *&c.* would make it to be *no Imputation* of it *in se*; for those are but *Effects*, and that by virtue of the same Compact. (2.) A Zeal for the Gospel-Righteousness *of Faith:* But that is very consistent with the imputed Righteousness *of Christ*; and tho' both meet in our Justification, yet it's under very distinct Considerations, of which afterwards.

NOR can I forbear again to inform the world, that both Extremes arise from too much *disregard* of the one or the other *Covenants*, wherein the Salvation of a Sinner is adjusted. These Brethren, forgetting the *Covenant of Redemption* to which the Gospel-Covenant is subordinate, too little mention the Righteousness of Christ: The other Brethren overlook the *Gospel-Covenant*, and darken a Gospel-Righteousness of Faith: Whereas a distinct respect to the Rule of *Satisfaction* aud *Impetration* on the one hand, and to the Rule of the *Application* of impetrated Benefits on the other hand, would put a period to their principal Disputes.

FROM this Representation of the several Sentiments of the Brethren concerned in the Point before us, a mutual Forbearance seems no unjustifiable thing between them who differ most; and no considerable Disagreement

Diſagreement remains between the others. For,

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(1.) THEY who think the *Imputation* of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs *in ſe*, is God's reckoning *we* did and ſuffered what Chriſt did, claim a tender regard from them who ſay *it's imputed* only *as to Effects*; for they diſown the *Antinomian* Conſequences of it, and abhor all Abuſes of it to carnal *Boaſts* and profane *Libertiniſm*, of which before. How unreaſonable then were it to perpetuate Conteſts about this Point from the *ill Conſequences* of it, when thoſe Conſequences are denied?---On the other hand, it appears too like uncharitable Rigidneſs for them to *condemn* as intolerable, ſuch who ſay Chriſt's Righteouſneſs is imputed *only as to Effects:* For whatever is the ſound of their words, they aſcribe nothing to *Faith* or *Works* which belongs to Chriſt's Righteouſneſs; nor do they detract from the honour of *Chriſt's Righteouſneſs* any thing which theſe Brethren aſcribe thereto, and are Orthodox in the Doctrine of *Satisfaction* againſt *Socinianiſm* and *Popery*. When they ſay, *Faith* is an accepted Righteouſneſs, do they mean, it's a *Satisfaction*, either to atone for Sin, or merit Life? No, they abhor it, and confine both to Chriſt's Righteouſneſs entirely. But *they do not ſay, Chriſt's Righteouſneſs is imputed:* That's not true; for they expreſsly ſay, it is imputed. Ay, *but not*

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in se: But should that be so, would it not be far from a Christian Spirit, to be implacable for *not using a Phrase* which the Spirit of God makes no use of, who surely knew how to express Truth as properly as fallible Men should pretend to? *Yea, but the Scriptures speak what amounts to this Phrase:* And so do they, in granting Christ's Righteousness to be the only Atonement, and meriting Cause of Pardon and Life, and of Acceptance with God as righteous Persons. *But do not they think, we stand before God only in this Righteousness of Faith, and not of Christ?* No; they assure us, that what Righteousness *Faith* is, it's so by Christ's Sacrifice and Merits; and it's only a Righteousness, as a *performed Condition* of the Gospel, describing the Persons who obtain that Salvation, which is the Effect of the Righteousness of Christ; and whose Satisfaction still interposeth between the Justice of God and a believing Sinner: Neither are they backward to ascribe to *efficacious Grace* that Virtue, whereby we are inclined and enabled to believe. Men may expose each other by *fiery Debates* after such Concessions; but he who expresseth most Heat, discovers the more ungospel Spirit, if not the weaker Cause, and weaker Judgment.

(2.) As for such who own Christ's Righteousness *in se* to be *imputed* in the second

second sense, and those who say it's not imputed *in it self*, but *as to Effects*; if they contend, the *first* must quarrel with the other, for denying in words what they grant for substance; and the *latter* must be warm against the former, because they will not join with them in offending the weak, and hazarding Truth, by rejecting *a Phrase*, which, well explained, doth properly express what both intend. CHAP. VIII.

CHAP. IX.

An Abstract of what helped me to avoid some Perplexity concerning Justification, *with some account of our being justified at the Creator and Redeemer's Bar.*

THO' I avoid arguing any Controversy in these Sheets, which are designed for Peace; yet I think it may promote this healing Design, to give a short Abstract of some thoughts whereby I arrived to Satisfaction in the Doctrine of *Justification*. CHAP. IX.

§. 1. JUSTIFICATION being a *forensick* Act, our thoughts ought not to wander

CHAP. IX. beyond what is neceſſary to it as a *judicial Sentence*, nor diſregard whatever belongs to that. Here the principal Conſiderations are, the Judge, the Rule of Judgment, the Cauſe and Perſon to be tried by that Rule, and the Sentence to be paſs'd by the Judge on the Perſon whoſe Cauſe is ſo tried; which muſt be no other, than what that Rule of Judgment, duly applied, containeth. Hereby what ſome call *Conſtitutive Juſtification*, is ſtrictly no other, than the Conformity of the Perſon to the Rule of Judgment, by which he is acquittable or rewardable, or both. *Paſſive Juſtification* is no other, than the Effect of the judicial Sentence; or the Perſon's State conſidered as abſolved, or to be rewarded, or both, by the Sentence now judicially paſs'd upon him; and ſuppoſeth a Sentence, and is meaſured by it.

§. 2. A JUSTIFYING Sentence *is paſs'd* upon every juſtified Perſon, and *continues* to paſs upon him by the Goſpel-Promiſes, applied by an omnipreſent, all-ſeeing, infallible, faithful, almighty God. *Rom.* v. 1, 2. The Goſpel-offer is the *Rule of Judgment*; the Goſpel in its reſpective *Promiſes* complied with, is God's *juſtifying Sentence*, and that, concluſive and effectual, tho' not ſo diſcernible by us, as if it were ſolemnly pronounced. Here therefore,

(1.) THE

(1.) THE transcendent Perfections of God must raise our minds above human Judicatories. He needs no *Evidence*, because he knoweth all things; there needs no Summons to *appear*, for he is ever with us; he cannot *err* in Judgment, for he is inflexibly righteous, and knows the Rule of Judgment in its extent and allowances. CHAP. IX.

(2.) WE know not what Solemnity this Sentence may be pronounced with *concerning us*, tho' out of our hearing. We know not what Solemnity may be used *in Heaven*, where there is Joy for the Conversion of Sinners; or what *at the Throne*, where Christ is our interceeding Advocate, *&c.* Tho' sometimes God condescends to make it audible to *our own Consciences* by the received Testimony of his Spirit.

(3.) THIS Sentence is *in part executed* upon every Believer as to what is promised for the present, as well as *his Title is adjudged* to what is reserved for the future. The in-dwelling Spirit, Assistances peculiar to Christ's Members, Answers of Prayer, the Comforts of the Holy Ghost, and whatever special Actings of Providence belong only to God's adopted ones, are the *Execution* of the justifying Sentence, and suppose such a Sentence pass'd, as well as that it is a gracious one.

(4.) GOD still pronounceth a justifying Sentence, according to the *variety* of

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of his Gospel-Promises, tho' that great one which *alters our State* passeth upon our first believing. As he adjudgeth us to Pardon and Adoption, upon our *first acceptance* of his Grace; so he adjudgeth us *non-forfeiters*, upon our abiding in Christ, or *persevering acceptance*, according as the various Promises describe the *Heirs* thereof.

§. 3. THE *same* justifying Sentence, that God pass'd by his Promises applied by himself *in this Life*, will be more solemnly and convincingly pronounced *at the Judgment-Day*, when the full and perfect Execution of the Sentence is to take place.

(1.) WE shall be *as truly* judged *at that day*, as if we had not been sentenced, or the Sentence executed at all, in this Life, or at Death. The wise God, who knows the Subserviency hereof to *Practical Religion*, doth oft and most expressly deliver it, and in such words as if we were all to be among those that shall be found alive when the Trumpet sounds. *For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive*, &c. (a). *So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God* (b). And what must we give an account of? *Our Words*

(a) 2 Cor. v. 10. (b) Rom. xiv. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 5.

Words (c), the *Secrets of our Hearts* (d), the *use of our Talents* (e), *our Works* (f), *&c.* that is, every thing that gives Evidence concerning men's Condition, as it's determinable by the Rule of Judgment, which principally centers in this, Have they *sincerely accepted* of the Salvation offered by the Redeemer? CHAP. IX.

(2.) THE Rule of Judgment and Sentence *at that day* will be *the same*, as that by which every Believer is justified on this side Death. It's no new or other Sentence, but the same more solemnly declared; unless you'll say, it includes the entire extent of the Rule for the time of trial, as well as that which changed our State.

(3.) THE great design of that solemn Process and open Sentence, is to vindicate God in Christ as *no Respecter of Persons* (g), in the extremely different State of the Damned and the Saved, both in this Life and Eternity, especially such as lived under the offers of Salvation; and withal to vindicate his own mysterious Methods towards the Justified in their past Life, as also to vindicate *them* from unjust Aspersions (h). But to instance no more than the first: He'll convince Angels and

(c) Mat. xii. 36. (d) Rom. ii. 16. (e) Mat. xxv. 19, *& seq.* (f) Rev. xx. 12, 13. (g) Rom. ii. 11. (h) 2 Thes. i. 6, 7. Dan. xii. 2. 3. Mat. xxii. 12, 13. xxv. 34, *& seq.*

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and Men by *manifeſted Inſtances*, that they whom he juſtified, and now ſaveth, were Perſons *juſtifiable* by that Rule of Judgment whereby the others are condemned; and that the Sentence he pronounceth and executes *on each*, is the *very Sentence* which that Rule impartially applied to their real Caſes denounced.

§. 4. THE *Rule of Judgment* in its nature and ſcope is to be principally regarded, in order to right Apprehenſions concerning the juſtifying Sentence. This determineth what is a juſtifying Righteouſneſs, and what is not: This declares the nature of the adjudged Title, whether it be of Grace or Debt, dependent or independent: And thereby is evident what we are adjudged to, and whether the Sentence paſſeth upon ſeveral complex Conditions, or one particular one: For we muſt be free from whatever the Rule of Judgment denounceth condemnable, and not be without what it confineth its promiſed Abſolution or Benefits to; ſeeing the Lord our Judge doth ſentence us, as this revealed Rule takes hold of us.

§. 5. I FIND nothing plainer, than on the one hand, that we are *made righteous by Chriſt's Obedience* (i), that we are *accepted*

(i) Rom. v. 19. 2 Cor. v. 21.

cepted in the Beloved (k), and *washed from our Sins in his Blood* (l); and that *by him we receive the Atonement* (m): And on the other hand, that *Faith is imputed for Righteousness* (n), and we are *justified by Faith* (o), and *by our Words* (p), and *by our Works* (q), and men are called *righteous*, with respect to their Graces and Actings short of Perfection; that Christ's *judicial Proceedings* are upon men's *Temper and Behaviour* (r), and Promises of Pardon and Life are made still to Repentance, Faith, and Perseverance; and that the Gospel denounceth *Death* against the *impenitent* (s), the *unbelieving* (t), the *disobedient* (u), the *barren* (x), *Apostates* (y), and *Workers of Iniquity* (z). Nor can it be overlook'd, that *Perfection* is not intended in what the Gospel-Promise is made to, nor is the Gospel-threatning of Damnation levell'd against any Offences consistent with *Sincerity*. Hence I conclude, that when God *justifies a Sinner*, the Rule by which he judgeth requires a judicial regard to inherent Faith, *&c.* CHAP. IX.

§. 6. By *one Rule of Judgment* the same

(k) Eph. i. 6. (l) Rev. i. 5. (m) Rom. v. 11. (n) Rom. iv. 9, 11, 22, 24. (o) Rom. iii. 30. v. 1. (p) Mat. xii. 37. (q) Jam. ii. 24. (r) Mat. x. 32. xxii. 13. xxv. 30. (s) Luke xiii. 3. (t) John iii. 36. (u) Rom. ii. 8. (x) Heb. vi. 8. (y) Heb. x. 38. (z) Luke xiii. 27.

CHAP. IX. same *justifying Sentence*, in all respects, could not be pronounced upon Christ's Righteousness, and upon that of a believing Sinner: Unless either,

[1.] THAT *one Rule* did originally promise Life to *perfect* legal Obedience, and also to that which was *not* a perfect Obedience to the Law. But if I suppose this, I must admit, that the Law did *not denounce Death* for the least Sin; for to condemn to Death for the *least Sin*, and to promise Life to *imperfect* Obedience, cannot be consistent. Yea, I must then consider God to enact that Rule of Judgment, as in his *first relation* to innocent Man, *viz.* as *Creator*; governing by virtue of his absolute Propriety in Man as his Creature: But if God be considered only in that relation, it was inconsistent with his *Perfections* to enact a Rule of Judgment which promised Life to any thing short of *perfect* Obedience to the Law he delivered, and which Man was originally capable to obey. And moreover, we find in the Rule of Judgment, by which he now justifies men, a direct respect to many things, which that first Law was inconsistent with; as the Death of a Redeemer for our Sin, Faith in this Redeemer, Pardon of Sin, and Absolution from the Curse which condemned us as Sinners, *&c.* Or unless,

[2.] THAT *one Rule* of Judgment were

were the *Gospel-Promise* of the Redeemer, *viz. He that believeth shall be saved.* Hereby indeed the *justifying Sentence* would directly pass upon Man as a *Believer*, and judge him to a Right in whatever the Gospel promised to Believers, *qua* such. And considering the chief design of the Gospel is to induce fallen Sinners to *believe*, upon a supposition and assurance given, that *Satisfaction* is already made by our Redeemer, and not *now* to be made or adjusted; many are apt to confine their thoughts of *Justification* to this, as the *alone Rule* of Judgment, and the account of the final Judgment generally states it in this manner: Nor can I deny, but this is in some respects a safe as well as easy method. CHAP. IX.

BUT I cannot agree, that the *justifying Sentence* is by this Rule so abstractedly taken: For, (1.) This would too much confine the Influence of Christ's Merits to the *mere procuring* of the Gospel-Promise; whereas we find it more *immediately* and *fully* connected with Pardon, and all other saving Benefits. (2.) We must be *made righteous* by Christ's Obedience, in some way less remote than this. (3.) The *Satisfaction* of Christ is not hereby sufficiently *acknowledged* nor *applied* in our Justification. Many other Reasons might be given, why I am convinced, that when God justifies a believing Sinner, the Sentence

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tence respects him under some further judicial Consideration than merely *a Believer*; and consequently, the Rule of Judgment extensively taken, required somewhat more to constitute him a justifiable Person.

§. 7. I TAKE the *Rule of Judgment* therefore to be the *Gospel-Law*, in a subordinate connection with the *Law of Mediation*; wherein the Honour of our Creator governing us by the *Law of works* is provided for, and the Ends of that Law fulfilled: And so the *Sentence* will respect the imputed Righteousness *of Christ*, and the Righteousness *of Faith* too; the *first*, as satisfactory and meritorious with our creating *Lawgiver*; the *latter*, as the *performed Condition* of the *Redeemer*'s Grant of the blessed Effects of Christ's Satisfaction and Merits; and whereby this man who *believes*, is discriminated from such who *rejected* the Offer of Salvation. In the *first*, Justice is satisfied that a *Rebel* should be absolved and glorified; in the *last*, the Rule enacted by *governing Grace* is answered by the Believer; so that the Judge is no more *a Respecter of Persons* in *applying* these Benefits as a Redeemer, than he was regardless of *governing Justice* in the Condition upon which they were *procured* by our Saviour.

§. 8.

§. 8. THE *Rule of Judgment* then must be this: That the Believer (tho' a Sinner,) whose Absolution, Pardon, Acceptance as righteous, and Salvation, were promised *to Christ* by the governing *Creator* in reward of his Obedience and Sufferings, and promised *to himself* for the sake of Christ in the Gospel upon his believing with that Faith which it appoints, is to be absolved, pardoned, accepted as righteous, and saved. CHAP. IX.

FROM this *Rule of Judgment* is easily inferr'd that *justifying Sentence*, on which our State is changed, *viz.* "Thou art that "*true Believer*, whose Absolution, Pardon, Acceptance as righteous, and Salvation, were promised *to Christ* in the "*Covenant of Redemption*, and *to thy self* "personally in my *Gospel*; and therefore "thou art *adjudged* to be absolved, pardoned, accepted, and an Heir of Glory, "by virtue of that Promise made *to Christ*, "and the Gospel-Promise made *to thy self*; and hast a Title to plead Christ's "perfect Obedience and Sufferings for thy "certain enjoyment thereof, which will "also be continually pleaded by Christ "thy *Advocate*."

IN like manner we see, *Constitutive Justification* is our being made *such Believers*, through the Influence of the Spirit of Christ, as fall under the foresaid Promise made to Christ in the Covenant of

CHAP. IX. Redemption, and the Gospel-Promise made to our selves, and so are *conformed* to the Rule of Judgment, but yet are considered as not *judicially sentenced* according to it. Again, *Passive Justification* is no other, than our Persons and State considered as affected by that Sentence, as *already pass'd* upon us, *viz.* absolved, pardoned, accepted as righteous, and entitled to Glory. Finally, *Executive Justification* is no other, than God's *dealing with us* as Persons so absolved, pardoned, accepted, and entitled to Glory, and his *performing* whatever is included in the justifying Sentence, yet in the way, time, manner, and limits which the Gospel declares.

§. 9. THE Consideration of the *Rule of Judgment* as before explained, led me to affirm, that the *Justification* of a believing Sinner is *equivalent* to a twofold Justification, the one at our *Creator's Bar*, the other at the *Redeemer*'s; the *first*, by the imputed Righteousness *of Christ*; the *other*, by that *of Faith*; which I have insisted on in the *Postscript to Gospel-Truth*, *pag.* 496. *& seq.* And being desirous to prevent mistakes in this Point, (which I think is probable to prevent furious Debates concerning the Doctrine of *Justification*,) I'll give a few hints of fuller thoughts about it; premising only, that I hoped none would think,

think, that I said *there is a twofold Justifi-*CHAP. *cation*, for I make the Sentence to be but IX. *one*, tho' that includes what's *equivalent* to a twofold Justification; nor yet that I denied *Christ* as of one Essence with the Father to be *Creator*, or said there be *two actually existing Bars*. But these are things too low for many words.

[1.] I CONSIDER God at our first Formation as our *Creator*, governing men by *a Law* suited to their rational, innocent, and perfect Nature; by which Law he promised Life to *sinless* Obedience, and threatned Death for *all* Disobedience. God considered in this relation cannot be apprehended to enact a *Gospel-Law*, with a Promise of Pardon and Life to the *imperfect*, tho' sincere, Faith of Sinners.

[2.] I CONSIDER this Creator *offended* by man's Violation of his holy Law. Under this notion, (1.) He condemns the Sinner unless *Satisfaction* be made, and excludes him from Life unless *purchased* by one capable of meriting it. And, (2.) He would reject Faith, and every Work of a Sinner, as what could not be *satisfactory* or *meritorious*; this Offender being incapable to satisfy for the *least* Fault, or to merit the *least* Blessing.

[3.] I CONSIDER our *Mediator* transacting with our *offended creating Lawgiver* in the Covenant of *Redemption*; wherein, (1.) Our governing *Creator* de-

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mands of Christ, if he would save Sinners, that in their Nature he must obey the violated Law, and endure Death, and what was equivalent to its threatned Punishment, *in their stead.* (2.) He declareth, that this Obedience, and these Sufferings of this *Mediator*, considering the *Dignity* of his Person, should be *accepted* for *Satisfaction* for Sin, and for the *Merit* of eternal Life, and of whatever subserved Sinners obtaining thereof. (3.) He promiseth *Christ* as a *Reward* of his Obedience and Sufferings, that whoever of fallen Men should *believe* on him, should be absolved, pardoned, accepted as righteous, and eternally glorified, for the sake of what he was to do and suffer; and that a certain number *should believe* on him, and so be absolved, &c. *to his Glory*, and he have all Power, Authority and Judgment committed to him. (4.) Christ our Mediator *covenanteth* to do and suffer what was proposed, and accepts of the said Rewards. (5.) In due time Christ *performs* his Undertaking, and becomes intitled to the said Rewards, and invested in a right thereto; with respect to which, *he* is said to be *justified.* (6.) His Undertaking is allowed to *operate* as if performed, at least from *Adam's Fall*; and thereby his Kingdom, and the saving Effects of his Obedience and Death *antecede* his obeying and dying. (7.) Whatever concerned the Sinner's Salvation,

tion, was to be *founded* upon the *ſatisfacto-* CHAP.
ry and *meritorious* Death and Obedience of IX.
Chriſt our Mediator. And thus, (8.) *Man* is to be conſidered under the *firſt* Head, as an innocent Subject in a ſtate of Trial, according to the *Law of works*; and under the *ſecond* Head, as a Sinner obnoxious to the *Curſe* of the Law, paſt Relief by his own Merit; and yet, upon Chriſt's Satisfaction (purſuant to the Covenant of *Redemption* in this *third* Head,) *as ſavable* notwithſtanding the *Curſe* of the Law.

[4.] As an effect of this Tranſaction, I do not only conſider *Chriſt our Mediator* under the notion of a *Redeemer*, (as all will grant him to be in an *eſpecial* manner, becauſe he alone *paid* the redeeming Price;) but I conſider alſo the *Creator* to be *Redeemer*, as he gave his Son to be a Saviour, accepted the Satisfaction made by him, promiſed to him the foreſaid Rewards, and ſo far executed them as to inveſt him in his Office of an *accepted authorized Mediator*, admitting his Kingdom to commence, (as well as his Death to operate to ſaving effects,) before he actually died, *&c.* Upon theſe and the like accounts, I apprehend the bleſſed God, conſidered *eſſentially*, (tho' the *Father* eminently bears the Title of *Creator*, and ſuſtains the Dignity of the Divine Eſſence and Government in *propoſing* the Terms, and *receiving* Satisfaction,) to ſtand towards us in the relation of a

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Redeemer, who hath received Satisfaction, tranſacting with us in and by our Mediator, in whom he is well pleaſed.

OUR *Creator* being conſidered thus as *God in Chriſt*, who is ſatisfied as to the Violation of his Law, (the Honour of his Government being vindicated, and the Ends of it ſecured, tho' Pardon and Life be granted to Sinners;) it will follow, that in a conſiſtency with *rectoral Juſtice*, he can ſo far ſuſpend the *Curſe* of the Law towards ſinful Man, and exert his Mercy, as, (1.) To be *willing* to admit to Peace and Favour, all whom Chriſt ſhall preſent to him. (2.) To be *ready* to forgive our Offences. (3.) To make *Offers* of Peace, Pardon, and Salvation to *loſt Sinners*, begging them to be *reconciled*, &c. (4.) To return his expelled forfeited *Spirit*, to ſtrive with and work on *dead Sinners* in order to their acceptance of this offered Salvation. And, (5.) To be *long-ſuffering*, and *waiting to be gracious*, in the uſe of fit methods and means to conquer their Reſiſtance. Theſe, and the like, immediately enſue upon *Chriſt's Satisfaction*: And if men intend but Inſtances of this kind, when they ſay, God was *reconciled to us* by the Death of Chriſt *before* Converſion, we ſhould allow it; yet intreating them to *note*, that the Curſe *ſuſpended* thus far, and the Curſe *removed* by an actual Intereſt in ſaving Bleſſings, are very diſtinct, as be

Forgive-

Forgiveness *with God*, and Forgiveness be- CHAP. stowed *on us:* And yet I fear, many do IX. detract from this Benefit, *viz.* that there is *Forgiveness with God* for guilty *Sinners*, and *Salvation* for undone *Apostates*; which is *in it self* a higher thing, than that this or that man is *Partaker* of it, tho' our personal Advantage consisteth in the latter.

[5.] I CONSIDER God in Christ as *Redeemer*, making his *Offers of Salvation* to Sinners, and stating the *Conditions* upon which he will give the merited Pardon and eternal Life personally to them; *commanding* their acceptance, with a *Promise* of applying Christ's Satisfaction in those effects upon their Compliance, and *denouncing* their abiding under Guilt and Misery, with *sorer Punishments*, if they finally refuse. This is by the *Gospel:* To explicate which, *Note*, (1.) Compliance is enjoined by a *governing Authority*, tho' with a display of *Grace*: It supposeth Christ's *Sacerdotal Offering* over, and is an Instrument of *Government* resulting from a Dominion acquired as *Redeemer*; and therefore may well be called *a Law*, yea, and that by which he will *judge* us. (2.) The Historical account of Christ's Offices, Fulness, Love, Death, and of Man's Misery; the displays of *Covenant-Benefits* present and eternal, the revelations of Divine Truths and Mysteries, Gospel-Institutions, and Directions whence to derive Grace, *&c.*

CHAP. IX. are all to *subserve* our due acceptance of this Offer. (3.) If Christ had not *proclaimed* Pardon and Life to Sinners, we had not known that these were to be obtained by *any* of us. If he had not declared, that he gave Pardon and Life to *such as have Faith*, and *none else*, we had not been certain whether it were the Believer or Unbeliever were pardoned: If he had not told us, he gave Faith and *then* Pardon, there had been no known *Order* of these Gifts: If by his *Gospel* God had not *offered* Pardon to all *if* they would accept it, *commanding* their acceptance in *order* to it, *promising* it upon their acceptance, and determining to *judge* men as they accepted or refused, then there had been *only an Order* in giving Faith and then Pardon, but Acceptation had been *no Condition* nor *Righteousness*, nor had Man been *justifiable* by it, or *condemnable* to the want of Pardon for rejecting it. (4.) Acceptance of offered Salvation, tho' a *Righteousness*, supposeth a *meriting* Righteousness of Christ; and can be no higher a Righteousness, than a *performed Condition* of a *Law of Grace*, by which Benefits already impetrated are given: Which Law differs not from a *Deed of Gift*, but that the Donor expresseth a *governing Authority* in the method of applying these Blessings, and resolves to *judge* them to whom that Offer is made, by their acceptance or non-acceptance.

ance. (5.) Our *Right* adjudged upon our acceptation, is a Right *of Grace* and Mercy; and tho' infallible, it can infer no Claim *of Debt.* (6.) This Acceptation is *described* by the Gospel; and nothing is *an Acceptation* upon which we shall *receive* the offered Blessings, if it be not in its Principle, Nature, Extent, Operativeness and Duration, *such an Acceptation* as the *Gospel* doth promise its saving Benefits to: (7.) Tho' this *Acceptation* merit nothing, yet *Christ's Righteousness* being ordained to merit Salvation for such as *shall accept* of it, and this *Acceptance* being the Gospel-ordained *Condition* of our personal Interest in that merited Salvation, we cannot be *saved* without either of them. (8.) To prevent mistakes I add, the *Elect* shall infallibly be brought *savingly* to accept of this Salvation. CHAP. IX.

[6.] I CONSIDER God, *applying* Pardon, Peace, Adoption, *&c.* to men that have *accepted* of this Salvation, according to the Gospel-offer. And herein, (1.) He acts as a *Judge.* (2.) The Relations he stands in are, as *Creator*, and *Redeemer*; the first ceaseth not, tho' the other is superadded. (3.) The *Cause* is adjusted by the *Rule of Judgment* described in §. 8. And this Cause *partly* refers, to what satisfied the *offended Creator* for this Sinner's *Fault*, and merited Salvation for this *forfeiting* Rebel: Here *Christ's Righteousness*

is

CHAP. IX. is the only *justifying* Righteousness; *Faith* hath no place in God's regard, who as *Creator* judgeth in this matter. The Cause is *partly* also; "Is this *a true Accepter* of Salvation, *for whom* Pardon, Peace, and Glory were promised *to Christ* in the Covenant of *Redemption* in reward of his satisfying, meriting Death and Obedience, and *to whom* these were promised in the *Gospel?*" Here *Acceptation* is a *Righteousness*, the want whereof *Christ's Righteousness* is not appointed to supply; and the adjudging a man a *Believer*, intitled to Pardon, Peace, and Glory, upon the *Satisfaction* of Christ, I call *active Justification*, or the Judge's justifying Sentence.

[7.] I CALL it a Justification at the *Creator*'s and *Redeemer*'s Bar.—I call it so *at the Creator's Bar*, as far as the Sentence refers to what *vindicated* the Honour of God's violated Law, *secured* his governing Authority as our Maker, and *merited* the Blessings, before which there was no Pardon, Peace, or Glory for the Sinner, tho' *a Believer*; none to be *offered*, none to be had by *accepting*. Nor is it a needless thing, that the *justifying Sentence* have an express Regard to what that refers to, *viz. Christ's Righteousness:* For as it was *the alone Condition* of Christ's Impetration of Pardon, Peace, and Life for Sinners, so when these are to be adjudged to the Sinner, the *Honour* of the Creator, of the violated

lated Law, and of Christ's Satisfaction, is wisely provided for, by an express acknowledgement of, and reference to *that Righteousness*.—I call it a Justification *at the Redeemer's Bar*, as far as the Sentence refers to our Acceptation, or Faith, *as a Righteousness*; for the unsatisfied *Creator*, who governeth and judgeth by the *Law of works*, could make *no Offers* of Pardon and Glory to Sinners, if they would *accept*, nor admit *Faith* to be *a Righteousness*; and yet, considered *as a Redeemer*, (as God was, when he had *received Satisfaction*,) he could not again demand a satisfying, meriting *Righteousness* to acquit the Believer now upon; no, nor require *Faith*, (unless under the notion of *a Redeemer*,) as a *proper Condition* of Pardon, *&c.* because in the Covenant of *Redemption* it was promised *to Christ* for Sinners as merely *described by Faith*. But God in Christ as *Redeemer* could make the *Gospel-offer* of Pardon *upon condition* of Acceptation, enjoining that Acceptance, and promising thereto the Pardon impetrated by Christ; and so *that Acceptation* is referred to in the *justifying Sentence* of God in Christ as *Redeemer*, as what discriminates one Man who obtains the Pardon according to the Gospel-Promise, from him who is judicially debarred of it. CHAP. IX.

[8.] I THINK, they who are altogether for *Faith* as the only *imputed Righteousness*

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teouſneſs in Juſtification, do too much *contract* the *juſtifying Sentence*, by excluding that diſtinct Reſpect which ought to be to the *Satisfaction* and meriting Obedience of Chriſt, whereby God as our governing *Creator* can admit the Abſolution of a Sinner. And they who are altogether for the *Righteouſneſs of Chriſt* as only *imputed* in Juſtification, do alſo too much *limit* the *juſtifying Sentence*, by excluding the Goſpel-Righteouſneſs of *Faith*, which the *Redeemer* regards, and by which he judicially diſcriminates who among them, to whom Salvation was offered, ſhall obtain it, and who of them ſhall not obtain it. May theſe Hints contribute to an Agreement between theſe worthy Perſons, or at leaſt incline all to Chriſtian Forbearance, and I ſhall reckon it worth all my Labour and Sufferings. Oh that *the God of Peace* would *give us Peace* by any *juſt* means!

THE

THE

VANITY

OF

Childhood and Youth;

WHEREIN

The depraved Nature of YOUNG PEOPLE is repreſented, and Means for their Reformation propoſed:

BEING

Some SERMONS preached in *Hand-Alley*, at the Requeſt of ſeveral Young Men.

To which is added,

A CATECHISM for YOUTH.

Printed in the Year 1691.

TO THE

CHILDREN

AND

YOUNG PEOPLE,

WHO

Were HEARERS of the following

SERMONS.

THE design of these Sermons *was to regulate and improve the state of your souls. The blessing of God having made them successful to several of you, inclined me to publish them at your importunity; tho' I do oft refuse a compliance with many judicious friends, in desires of the same kind, even when the subjects are more persuading.*

Having overcome the discouragement which I suggested to my self, from the plainness of these discourses, I dare not make an apology for the commonness of the stile or matter.

matter. It had been a profanation of an ordinance, *when desired to preach to youth, to propose any subject below what tends to their salvation from that sin and wrath they are naturally under. It had beeen* folly, *to treat of such a subject for edification before children and apprentices, in words unapt to inform or persuade them. I thank God, I could rather bear the dislike of a few less serious wits, than neglect the eternal concerns of so many less intelligent hearers. On the same account, I am now afraid to raise the stile, or omit the very repeated appeals and pleadings with children; being resolved to approve my self to the weakest reader, and leave the judicious to what is more fitted to their improvement.*

My prayer and hopes are, that God will accompany this book with powerful effects on your souls, and not leave you to that obstinacy, as will render it a farther aggravation of your sin and punishment. You cannot pretend, that God never informed you of your Disease, nor directed you to a Cure: You dare not, after reading this book, say, "My danger was concealed from me, and "rules for my safety were not prescribed." God will severely witness, that he condescended to argue matters with thy soul; he dissuades thee from the sins, that will condemn thee at last, however thou now flatterest thy self. He useth many arguments to incline thee to duties, which his very Gospel

pel cannot dispense with the want of, in any person whom he will save.

Let me then acquaint thee, oh young man! that God addresseth himself to thee, as by name. Thou by nature art brutish and deviliſh, and as long as thou followeſt the imaginations of thy vain mind, thy case becomes more desperate; thy lusts by indulgence grow more violent, and conscience still less concerned, to vindicate the affronts thou offereſt to God's dominion, or to represent the injury thou doſt to thy own soul: Yet be assured, whether thou mindeſt it or not, there is a God, whose right it is to govern thee, and will be sure to judge thee: Thou art born his subject, tho' unwilling to obey, and forward to rebel against him. Thou haſt an immortal soul, how little soever thou provideſt for its future state; yea, how much soever thou acteſt to expose it to endless misery, and this for a short and fading pleasure. Thou art naturally depraved, and thereby under that condemnation, which was passed by the law of innocency against man, in the least sinful.

Oh then, do not fancy, that Baptism did regenerate thee, while thou findeſt the want of every grace, and carnal inclinations are thy governing law. Do not conceit, that Baptism delivered thee from thy curſed state, when thy unbelief and enmity against holiness, do both express it, and further expose thee to it. It's true, there is a way of

salvation for loſt man publiſhed in the Goſpel; but that can benefit none, who continue to reject Chriſt, and refuſe the terms of peace. Thou art the dedicated child of believing parents; but their faith cannot ſave thee, now that thou art capable of conſenting to the covenant, and refuſeſt it; yea, thy early dedication adds perjury and falſhood to thy profaneneſs. Plead not thy chriſtian name, while thou art a reproach to it. Boaſt not of religious helps, when they have not that good effect on thee, as the light of nature hath on mere Pagans; which may convince us, that where the Goſpel fails to convert its hearers, Satan often governs more powerfully, than if the Goſpel had never been preached to them. We live in an age of wonders, among which it is not the leaſt ſtrange or awful, that profeſſed Chriſtians are viler than Heathens, and moſt of our baptiſed youths ſcorn the plaineſt rules of Chriſtianity. Ah, wretched age! wherein goſpel-light cannot convince of that wickedneſs, which even nature condemns! What conception have they of God, who think he can approve of ſuch enormities as they commit, or be ſatisfied with thoſe heartleſs and trifling regards to which they confine all the homage which they afford him?

Surely England's *calamities are like to be terrible, when this jealous God ariſeth to force men to juſter thoughts both of his nature and his laws.*

I muſt

I must allow, that this treatise is intended to convince thee of the great evil of such things, as most esteem indifferent, and practise as allowable; yea, so far doth their blindness prevail, that sobriety (much more Godliness) is ridicul'd as folly. But know, that the feeling of endless torments will soon convince such, as dare mock at divine revelations. The perfections, that render God able to endure their affronts now, will oblige him to vindicate his government and honour then. Poor wretches, that would not be ruled by means suited to their natures, as rational, shall without their consent undergo the inflicted evils, which, while only threatned, did not move them. Therefore, young man, be not affrighted from true wisdom by the clamours of the worst of fools, whatever wit they pretend to. Undo not thy self for the sake of a croud; for it's better be religious with the lesser number now, than be damned hereafter with the multitude. Sure thou must be an Atheist, and wholly disbelieve unseen things, if the contempt or persuasions of enslaved factors for the devil can incline thee to chuse hell, by resolving on the course that infallibly tends to it.

I must acquaint you, that in the last Sermon *I add no particular to the notes, one of your selves took from me when I preached, and supplied me since with, to help the defect of my own papers; yet I have added many of the directions for avoiding the eight*

particular ſins I diſſuaded you from in my firſt Sermon. *I have alſo thought fit to ſubjoin* a ſhort Catechiſm *at the end, wherein you may learn the eſſentials of practical religion in familiar terms: If thou think fit to learn it, conſult the proofs.*

The good Lord proſper all to you! Could I but ſee young ones generally inclined to ſerious Religion, I ſhould hope, that God hath a mercy in reſerve for England; *and the vengeance that hangs over it, becauſe of the laſt thirty years too ſucceſsful contrivances to debauch the nation, in order to Slavery and Popery, might be diverted, or at leaſt confined to ſuch as are too far engaged, or obſtinate, to admit a reformation.*

That every child and youth who ſhall read this book, may (as many of you already do,) thus contribute to my hopes, and ſhare in the benefit thereof, ſhall be the prayer of

Your compaſſionate Friend,

April 12,
1691.

DANIEL WILLIAMS.

THE

THE

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Childhood and youth are vanity.

THIS preſent meeting is for the ſpiritual advantage of you, Children and Young people. Your good we Miniſters muſt intend; and it's your intereſt and duty to regard, and improve theſe helps, as well as elder perſons; for your ſouls are as immortal, as the aged. God hath a right to govern you, being you are his creatures. He hath given you a rule of life; he obſerveth your hearts and carriage with concern. Young ones ſhall be arraigned at God's tribunal, and judged by the rule contained in his word, according to what they have been and done. Heaven and Hell are before you; one of them will be the eternal dwelling of the youngeſt in this aſſembly; and conſidering, that moſt of mankind die when young, Heaven and Hell are fuller of young people, than of ſuch as are arrived to a greater age.

Do ſuch conſiderations affect you? Ought they not to make me ſerious, and importunate

tunate with your ſouls? and with *yours* eſpecially, becauſe youth is under great indiſpoſitions to all that is ſerious and ſaving?

Num. xvi. 22. OH! let us look earneſtly for a bleſſing to him, who is *the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh*, and therefore is able to impreſs and manage your ſpirits, tho' unruly and vain.

THE author of this book is *Solomon*. Will you regard what *a great man* ſaith? He was King of *Iſrael* in its moſt proſperous ſtate. Are *a wiſe man*'s dictates to be heeded? He was the wiſeſt of mere men. But above that, this book was the reſult of great experience; he ſpeaks his feeling, as well as his judgment; yea, he records theſe things as *a penitent* after great offences, and therefore muſt repreſent things according to their truth and importance, eſpecially ſince he was inſpired by the infallible Spirit in what he here delivers.

I SHALL not look farther than the *9th verſe*, to lead you to my text. Where,

1. HE doth by a ſharp Sarcaſm reprove the ſenſual delights of young people; *Rejoice, O young man*, &c. It's ſuch a ſaying as Chriſt's to his diſciples, *Sleep on, and take your reſt*. It is not ſaid by way of approbation, but he expoſeth the ſenſualiſt by diſdain, which may affect ſome people more than a direct reproof; and God, for our good, condeſcends to try all ways. Surely you

Mark xiv. 41.

you that think ſenſual pleaſure the greateſt happineſs you are capable of, will ſuſpect, that it is not what it appears to your fooliſh minds, when God by the wiſeſt man doth thus *ironically* brand it: He loads you with ſcorn, while you fondly pleaſe your ſelves with theſe poor delights, as your only paradiſe. God keep me from that as my portion, which God accounts my reproach!

Obj. BUT may not a young man *rejoice?*

Anſw. YES, no doubt thou oughteſt to *delight thy ſelf in the Lord*; yea, thou mayeſt delight moderately and holily in objects of ſenſe; but that's not the *rejoicing* here expoſed. The following words explain the nature of this forbidden joy; it's that *evil pleaſure* which thou takeſt *in walking in the ways of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes:* As if it were ſaid, "Oh vile creature! how baſe art thou become, that confineſt thy pleaſures to, "and reſolvedly walloweſt in, the delights "that come by following the vain imaginations of thy carnal heart, and mere "gratifying thy ſenſes? What a brute art "thou, that ſporteſt thy ſelf in a diſregard of God and unſeen things, and va"lueſt the time of youth only as it fits "thee to execute what is ſinful, and re"liſh what is ſenſual! Is this *rejoicing* be"coming thee as a reaſonable creature, "made for and ſuited to things of ſo far a "higher nature? Is thy Correſpondence

Pſal. xxxvii. 4.

"with

" with the objects of faith quite gone?
" Art thou so sunk and buried in flesh?
" Is there no spiritual light or love, to
" govern thy desires and pleasures?" If this be the merry young man, what an object of contempt is he in all his mirth? Even in his jollity he is to be scorned, as well as pitied.

2. He alarms this brutish sensualist with a prospect of *judgment*. God addresseth himself to thee as one stupidly ignorant; *But know thou*; (it's what thou art little acquainted with, or thoughtful about;) *for all these things he will bring thee into judgment*. A sore thorn in thy gay clothes, a great cooler to thy lusts, mere gall in thy cups, and a sad disturbance to thy airy conceits: *God will bring thee into judgment for all these things*. " Tho' thou
" despise his laws, thou shalt not escape
" his sentence: He will not leave it to
" thee, whether thou shalt be miserable,
" though he referred it to thy choice,
" whether thou wouldst be serious: He'll
" compel thee to feel his wrath, though
" he would not force thee to refrain thy
" voluptuousness. Yea, oh thou that sport-
" est thy self in thy brutish delights! thou
" shalt account for all, thou shalt suffer
" for each. Thy punishment shall be pro-
" portioned to thy sins, and to thy pleasures
" thou didst take in sinning; and dost thou
" never consider how great that's like to
" be?"

3. He

3. He then annexeth a ſerious *caution* againſt two evils, to which young perſons are obnoxious; *ver.* 10. *Therefore,* (1.) *Remove ſorrow from thy heart*; that is, *anger*, as the word may be rendred, or all thoſe heart-luſts which will end in ſorrow of heart. Thou art afraid of ſerioufneſs; thou ſeemeſt to prevent ſorrow by thy carnal mirth: But alas, thou art making way for the deepeſt groans by thy ſeeming cure; thou bringeſt on ſorrow by a pretended driving it away. But, young man, God ſeeing thou takeſt a wrong courſe, condeſcends to warn thee againſt the anguiſh which thou prepareſt by thy vicious inclination. (2.) *And put away evil from thy fleſh*; that is, fleſhly pollutions, to which youth is prone; or the bodily puniſhments, which vile courſes expoſe to. —If you take the firſt ſenſe, then, as in forbidding heart-luſts, he ſtops a courſe of ſin at the ſpring-head, without which all the attempts for reformation will be too feeble; ſo in forbidding fleſhly pollutions, he would reſtrain the acting of ſin: As if he had ſaid, "Tho' luſt is conceived in "the heart, yet let it not break forth in "thy practice; for abſtinence from wick-"ed acts will conduce to change thy "temper, and abate thy guilt."—If you take the latter ſenſe, then he argues from that miſery, which brutiſh youth is moſt likely to be affected by: As if it were ſaid,

"That

" That body which thou ſo indulgeſt, that " fleſh whereof thou art ſo tender, is like " to feel the woful effects of thy folly ; " therefore as thou loveſt thy very fleſh, " kindle not the flames which are to de- " vour it in hell ; bring not down thoſe " judgments, which may torment thy bo- " dy on this ſide the grave."

THE wiſe man introduces theſe advices by a motive referring to *ver.* 9. *Therefore, &c.* As if he had ſaid, " Becauſe *God will* " *bring thee into judgment*, avoid theſe ſins, " for which thou ſhalt certainly be ar- " raigned ; and prevent the miſeries, which " the ſentence will include, and which " the judge muſt execute according to the " ſanction of that law whereby thou ſhalt " be judged. Then, then, O young man ! " thou ſhalt know by the puniſhment felt, " that thy lawgiver's threatnings were not " vain, tho' during temptations they ap- " peared ſo."

MY text is a further motive, and as ſuch is here inſerted : *For childhood and youth are vanity* ; as if it were ſaid, " To theſe " ſins your young years are prone ; they " have room in your temper, and without " great care and labour cannot be re- " moved, or put away ; *therefore* be in- " tent and vigorous to *put away evil from* " *thy fleſh, to remove ſorrow from thy* " *heart*."

HAVING thus deſcrib'd the coherence of

of the words, I ſhall lay them down for a doctrine as they be in my text.

DOCT. *Childhood and youth are vanity.*

I SHALL explain this doctrine, and then inſiſt on that ſenſe of the words, which will moſt conduce to the advantage of young perſons.

[1.] CHILDHOOD and youth may be taken for that time of human life, which is ſhort of manhood.

IF you take it thus, then the whole clauſe may be thus expreſſed: "Though "you are very apt to boaſt of theſe years, "as moſt conducive to happineſs; tho' "now your ſpirits are vigorous, your "bodies healthy and ſtrong, your ſenſes "quick, the cares and maladies of old "age are far from you; yet all this will "not make you happy: This time of "youth it ſelf is *vanity*; it's inſufficient "to make thee a bleſſed creature; yea, "though thou didſt enjoy all ſenſible "things that can miniſter to its ſatisfac-"tion, it is but *vanity*; a poor thing, a "ſhort and empty matter, which leaves "its admirers deceived, yea, undone, if "they have no better proviſion." A ſe-rious old man diſdains thoſe years, and would not live them over again; yea, few live long, that wiſh not much of that time expunged

expunged out of their life, and remember it with a bluſh.

[2.] CHILDHOOD and youth denote perſons of thoſe years or age, *viz.* children and young people.

I SHALL conſider the words in this ſenſe; and of ſuch of you the Spirit of God proclaimeth *vanity*, as your proper epithet. But,

Queſt. WHAT is meant by *vanity*, as it is predicated of theſe young people?

Anſw. VANITY is either *natural* or *moral*: And thus it's the ſame as to ſay,

(1.) YOUNG people are frail and mortal. *All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof, as the flower of the field.* The robuſt youth hath his breath in his noſtrils; by the courſe of nature he may live longer than old men, yet by the frailty of nature he may die before the oldeſt man. Thou reckoneſt upon long life, but thou mayeſt die to morrow. Oh young man! thou haſt the ſeeds of death in thee, thou canſt not reſiſt any meſſenger of death; the *ſentence* lies againſt thee; and *ſin*, the cauſe of death, cleaves to thy early age. What variety of accidents art thou ſubject to every moment? It's by God's power, you children are alive till now, as well as the man of eighty. Oh young folk! that think of many years, before death and you can meet; how many younger

Iſa. xl. 6.

Heb. ix. 27. Rom. viii. 10.

younger than you are already rotten in their graves? There may be many children in this place, whoſe death your fathers, yea, grandfathers may live to mourn for? it's a brittle houſe *your* very ſouls inhabit.

Exh. I CANNOT omit this exhortation. Do and forbear, all you ought to do and forbear, in order to eternity, as perſons *within a ſtep of death.* I hope the youngeſt here are aſſured, that *there is no working in the grave.* What is to be done for eternity, muſt be done while you live; the ſtate of trial laſts no longer than life: Whatever is beyond the grave, is unchangeable reward or puniſhment. Eccl. ix. 10.

WILT thou lay to heart theſe things? (1.) I have much to do for eternity. (2.) Work for eternity is hard to do. (3.) This work as hard as it is, muſt be done, or I periſh for ever. (4.) How ſhort a while may I, as young as I am, have to do all this hard work in? which is the point I am upon. Young man, if *death* overtake thee, thou canſt not put it off till thou ſet about the work thou haſt neglected; all the cries in the world will avail nothing. Bethink thee then, if *Abijah* had not been *good betimes*, he muſt have been eternally undone: So it may be thy caſe, O child of ten years old! if thou doſt not get grace before thou art a year older, or it may be a month or week older, thou muſt die graceleſs. Doth not

Job xxxvi. 14. the word tell thee of ſome, *who die in youth, and their life is among the unclean?* Shall that be thy caſe? canſt thou bear it? Be perſuaded now to fix thy thoughts on ſuch things as theſe: "Shall I lye or "ſwear now, who may be dead within a "month? Dare I profane this ſabbath, "who may be dead within a week? yea, "my next ſin may be the laſt act of my "life. How can I live without Chriſt a "day longer, when I may die to night? "Shall I delay to know, and love, and fear "my God, who muſt do it ſoon or never? "I am ſure, If I do not fear God before I "die, Hell will be my place; and I am "not ſure of a week to attain this fear of "God." Did the youngeſt of you know your frailty, you would tremble at delays; you would not dare to ſin; you would bluſh at your ſlothfulneſs in any good work. Oh then hear this ſermon, as one that may never hear another! Pray the next time, as one that may never pray again! When thou art next tempted, aſk thy ſelf, "Would I yield to this, if I were to "die to-morrow?" Will you believe this, and walk as them that believe it? Even youth is too uncertain, for any wiſe one to venture to ſin, or neglect his ſalvation, as if ſure of time to repent, and repair his neglects.

(2.) VANITY is taken in a *moral* ſenſe, *viz.* as it regards the minds and manners. Thus

Thus the Spirit of God warns us againſt *walking in the vanity of the mind.* Vanity is oft put for *all ſins:* Yea, ſeveral ſins are expreſsly called *vanity*; and this name is applied, partly with reſpect to the nature of ſome ſins, but chiefly from the tendency and conſequence of every ſinful courſe. Every way of ſin is *vain*; and *ſin* deſerves the name of *vanity* from this conſideration, that it is committed to no valuable purpoſe; yea, it ends in what is deſtructive, and far worſe than merely unprofitable.

Eph. iv. 17. 2 Kings xvii. 15.

In this ſenſe I ſhall improve the Text, and it includes theſe things.

First, *Young people are prone to many ſins, that are notoriouſly vain.*

Secondly, *Young People are apt to live to very low and unprofitable purpoſes, which is vanity.*

Thirdly, *Young people are apt to live to evil and deſtructive purpoſes, which is the height of vanity.*

Before I enter on theſe things, let me aſk you young folk, Is not this a true charge? and is it not as awful a deſcription of your ſtate, as it is true?

Obj. But how comes this to be laid ſo univerſally, that young people are thus vain?

Anſw. 1. Because the generality of

young people are vain. For one that is ſober, how many are wild? for one that is pious, there be many prophane. A religious child is become a wonder. Godlineſs in youthful years is very rare; the body of your ordinary young people is ſottiſh; the generality of witty youths are atheiſtical and irreligious. When the diſeaſe is ſo common, the charge is proper as againſt the whole.

2. ALL young perſons are inclined to be vain: Vanity is the temptation of that age. Your conſtitution, and want of experience, do eſpecially expoſe you to this miſchief. Though grace may deliver ſome of you from the power of vanity, yet it hath not cleanſed you from all diſpoſition to vanity; it hangs about you, and liveth, though reſtrained. Your ſtumblings will be at this ſtone, and your faults will be under this head of youthful vanity.

YOUNG people! you ſee why the charge is ſo common: Will you then apply what I ſhall ſay to your ſelves? When I deſcribe this diſeaſe, ſay, "This is my diſeaſe." When I propoſe the remedy, ſpeak to thy ſoul, "This is proper for my caſe, this is "neceſſary to my condition." Thou child, ſay, "I am a child, and therefore apt to "be vain." Thou young man, ſay, "I "am a young man, and therefore I am "apt to be vain: I muſt deny my age, or "own this charge." Nay further, reaſon awfully

awfully with your ſelves, "Moſt young "people are under the power of vanity; "the wicked youths are a hundred, to "one that is pious. Oh my ſoul, what "is my condition! is there not more dan- "ger, that I am one of thoſe hundred "wicked ones, than that I am that *one* "pious young one?"

I SHALL now return to conſider the three particulars, under which I included the moral vanity of young people.

FIRST, *Young people are prone to many ſins, that are notoriouſly vain.*

THERE be ſome particular ſins, that in their nature argue more vanity than other ſins; they infer a very vain mind in the perſons committing them. Young ones have many of theſe ſins, and luſt is ſtrongly prompting them thereto.

I SHALL reduce your ſins to *eight particulars*, and give you ſome directions under each, to help you againſt that particular ſin: But remember, each of theſe are ſins. Every ſin defileth thy ſoul, and bindeth thee to undergo the puniſhment threatned, if it be not repented of and mortified: Nor canſt thou hope, that theſe ſins will be put away, unleſs thou follow the methods God hath directed for that end: He will not convert thee as a brute that regards nothing, tho' he muſt conſider thy weakneſs as a ſinner, and therefore

exert his power by the means thou attendeſt.

I. YOUNG *people are ſubject to folly.* The Spirit brands our tender years with this crime: *Folly is bound up in the heart of a child.* Is this limited to children? no, *A young man void of underſtanding*, is too often ſeen. This fault is not a want of that wiſdom which is unexpected from your age; but it is ſuch a folly, as in your years might have been healed; and it's made up of blindneſs and miſtakes, againſt that light which God hath afforded you.

Prov. xxii. 15.

Prov. vii. 7.

GOD hath given you reaſon to govern your ſelves by; you are under the means of wiſdom, whereby you may know your true end, and the proper means to that end. Nevertheleſs, moſt young perſons are *fools.* Doſt not thou place thy intereſt in things which are vain and deſtructive? Doſt thou not think jollity thy only heaven, and the pleaſing thy luſts the only real paradiſe? What is enjoying God, or glorifying God, to thee? theſe are things thou art unacquainted with, and unconcerned for.

Obj. PERHAPS thou wilt ſay, "I deſire to be ſaved, and I do ſomething towards it; how then do I miſtake my end or means?"

Anſw. 1. I FEAR, thou doſt not know, what it is to be ſaved. Salvation with thee is

is only being kept out of hell, as a place of torment, when thou haſt ſinn'd thy fill: But there is little more to commend heaven to thee. If there be not vain ſports, revelling, and the like carnal enjoyments, thou canſt not tell how heaven ſhould be a happy ſtate, tho' better than hell. But is not this the groſſeſt folly? What, to think *that* ſalvation, which contains no viſion of God, no perfect holineſs of heart, no full conformity to Chriſt, no raviſhing ſenſe or communications of the divine love, no hand in God's praiſes? Fooliſh youth! there's no heaven, but what principally includes theſe; *that* is not ſalvation, which wants any of theſe. Let me aſk thee, "Art not thou fooliſh, if thou "judgeſt ſalvation to be what it is not? Art "thou not fooliſh, to think it to be another "thing than God deſcribeth it to be? Art "thou not a fool, who fancieſt, *that* can-"not be a happy ſtate, unleſs it wants "what all good men account to be happineſs? and unleſs it includes ſuch "wicked and brutiſh things, as heaven "muſt keep and cleanſe us from?" Oh poor creature! thus fooliſh do thy notions of eternal life diſcover thee to be.

2. THY folly appeareth, in that thou fancieſt thou canſt be ſaved in another way, than that which leads to it. To convince thee of this, conſider,

(1.) CHRIST is the principal *way* to life. John xiv. 6.

life. He as a *Prieſt*, by offering up himſelf, merited life for ſuch as repent, believe, and obey him: He as a *Prophet* teacheth men the author, means, and nature of the terms of life: He as a *King* applies his purchaſe by the Spirit, ſubdues impediments, fits the ſoul for, and judicially admits it into glory. Now, child! doſt thou hope to live for ever, and neglect Chriſt? Is it not folly, to expect life, and to deſpiſe a Saviour, yea, to trample his blood under thy feet? Is it not folly, to hope to be ſaved by Chriſt, and yet to believe the devil rather than him, and to prefer the dominion of others before his government?

(2.) FAITH, repentance, and holineſs, are a way to heaven, ſubordinate to Chriſt: I ſay, *ſubordinate* to Chriſt, for they could not ſave thee but for a Chriſt. Sinners had never obtained them, but by a Chriſt; and they tend to ſave, as they refer to Chriſt, whoſe atonement is the only purchaſing price. But yet, they are a way to life; no man ſhall ever get to heaven without them. Chriſt hath reſolved, that without *faith*, no man ſhall have pardon by his merits; and therefore all the ſavingly enlightned do
Gal. ii. 16 *believe, that they may be juſtified.* He appoints us alſo to *repent*, that our ſins may
Acts iii. 19. be blotted out, *when the times of refreſhing ſhall come*; and limits the number of
Heb. v. 9. the ſaved, to ſuch as *obey him.*

Now young man, is it not folly in thee

to

to expect heaven, when thou haſt nothing which Chriſt has inſtituted as a means of that glory? Doth he as our law-giver declare, that he will and muſt ſuſpend thy ſalvation till thou believe; and wilt thou madly ſay, "He will ſave me though I do "not believe?" Doſt thou know what he'll do, better than himſelf?

YEA, your folly is greater, in that Chriſt hath not only ſuſpended life on theſe conditions; but he hath expreſsly declared, that *they* ſhall for ever periſh, who do not in theſe things ſubmit to him: And yet thou art confident.

WHAT greater folly, than for an unholy one to look for glory? when God ſaith, *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*; and *the wicked ſhall be turned into hell.* Is it not folly, to remain impenitent, and yet be in hopes of heaven? when Chriſt ſaith, *Except you repent, you ſhall all periſh.* Will not you own your madneſs, that look'd for life in your diſobedience? when you ſhall hear our Lord ſaying, *Slay theſe mine enemies, who would not that I ſhould reign over them.* Is it not an eſtabliſh'd rule under the goſpel, *He that believeth not, ſhall be damned?* Unbelief and hell are as certainly connected, as faith and heaven.

Heb. xii. 14. Pſal. ix. 17. Luke xiii. 3. Luke xix. 27. Mark xvi. 16.

3. THY folly appears yet more, in that thou fancieſt thou canſt be ſaved, in a way contrary to ſalvation, and certainly leading

to

to hell. Wouldſt not thou judge him a fool, that intending for *Dover*, yet chuſeth the road to *York?* Are not they fools, who deſiring health, refuſe phyſick, and take nothing but poiſon? Thy behaviour exceeds the groſſeſt of theſe inſtances.

WHAT bars any one from heaven, but the dominion of ſin? And *that* conſcience juſtly chargeth thee with. Doth not God
Rom. viii. 6. declare, that *to be carnally minded is death?* Thou art ſo minded, and yet expecteſt
Eph. v. 5. life. Is not God expreſs, that *no whoremonger, nor unclean perſon, nor covetous, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God?*
Rev. xxi. 8. and alſo, that *the abominable, and all lyars, ſhall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone?* Is he not as
1 Cor. vi. 10. poſitive, that *no fornicator, reviler, thief, or drunkard, can be ſaved?* What can be plainer, than that in being ſuch as theſe thou deſtroyeſt thy ſelf? Theſe vices lead to deſtruction, and God warns thee againſt fooliſh ſelf-deceit, by hoping for a better iſſue than ruin by ſuch a courſe. Oh ſottiſh youth! will theft, drunkenneſs, ſwearing, profaneneſs, (think you,) lead to heaven, after all theſe diſcoveries of God's reſolves? What will damn thee, if ſuch vices will not? Who can be damned, if thou be ſaved? Will a provoked God lye for thy ſake? No, no, his threats will take hold of thee, notwithſtanding thy ſilly dreams.

CHIL-

CHILDREN, you see I have described the *folly* of all young ones, who are wicked. And this I have shewn in this great instance, *viz.* They mistake their true happiness, and the way to it.

I MIGHT open this great sore beyond this. Alas! young people are generally ignorant of God, and themselves; they know neither good nor evil aright; they commend what they ought to dispraise; they chuse what they should reject; they make a mock of the greatest mischiefs, as sin and hell; they rarely understand men, or know how to carry it aright, for this world, or for eternity; they mistake truth for error, and are governed by appearances rather than realities. Where shall I stop, if I attempt a full display of the folly of youth?

Quest. WHAT shall I that am young do, to heal me of my *folly?*

Answ. (1.) BEG wisdom of God by fervent prayer: *If any of you lack wisdom,* Jam. i. 5. *let him ask it of God,* &c. Thou wantest wisdom, thou art bid to ask it: Thou art encouraged to ask; for he *giveth it* to such as ask; yea, he *gives liberally,* and *will not upbraid thee* with thy past folly, when thou settest thy self to get wisdom. Nothing will heal thy folly but wisdom, and a prayerless creature is never like to obtain it: Therefore press thy soul with the sense of its want, and with the loveliness and necessity of wisdom; this will help

help thee to ſtrong deſires, which are fervent prayers. O child! wilt thou be a fool for want of praying? Shall God ſay, "Here's a youth void of wiſdom, becauſe "he would not aſk it?"

(2.) STUDY and believe the Scriptures. If thy judgment be directed by the word, it will be found; for *that gives underſtanding to the ſimple.* Before you learn to read; and when you can read, read the ſcriptures moſt. There you muſt learn to think aright of God; they will teach thee, what the will of God is; the way of ſalvation is there diſcovered; from them thou haſt the trueſt account of ſin, and holineſs. In the written promiſes thou wilt know what to hope for; in the threatnings, what thou ſhouldſt fear; in the commandments, what thou muſt do; in the revealed doctrines, what thou ſhouldſt believe. Come, children, you are allowed to learn the ſcriptures. *Timothy* is commended for *knowing the ſcriptures from a Child.* Study you theſe; there is nothing needful for a Chriſtian, which is not contained therein; every thing as to ſalvation is doubtful, which is not deduced from theſe.

Pſal. cxix. 130.

2 Tim. iii. 15.

(3.) SUSPECT thy firſt thoughts, and never be governed by thy fancy. If thy ſudden imaginations be right, they will bear enquiry; if they be wrong, they need amendment. Ordinarily the firſt dictates

proceed

proceed from vanity; and ſhall that preſcribe, when life and death depend on thy reſolves? Nay, how knoweſt thou, but that they be Satan's whiſpers which thou executeſt, when fancy is thy guide? for he ſpeaks to the ſoul by impreſſing the imagination.

(4.) CONVERSE with the godly wife, and ſtrictly obſerve and lay up their ſayings and examples. The word tells us, *He that walketh with wiſe men, ſhall be wiſe; but a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed.* Their ſpeeches will inſtruct, their practice will allure imitation; whereas ill company will debauch thy mind, and nouriſh thy luſts. Prudent perſons will judge thy temper by thy aſſociates; well knowing, thou art already, or wilt certainly be, what thy choſen companions are. Prov. xiii. 20.

(5.) DESIGN all knowledge in order to practice, and live up to the light thou receiveſt. He that in ſacred things takes up with notions for notions ſake, is as truly a fool as if he knew nothing. It's a practical judgment that makes us ſpiritually wiſe, when other knowledge will aggravate our ſin and woe.

OH young man! wilt thou *ſay unto wiſdom, thou art my ſiſter?* Wilt thou caſt off folly with indignation, as thy great diſeaſe? Should you be fond of that which ſin introduced, and which obſtructs your healing while it prevails? Folly is the bane Prov. vii. 4.

of

of intellectual beings; and that's of the worſt ſort, which guides our practice. Folly is the root of all your other ſins. Wert thou ſpiritually wiſe, thy work were more than half done; and methinks, thou ſhouldſt not be hardly perſuaded to get wiſdom. Child! wouldſt thou be willing to be an *idiot?* Surely no; every one pities ſuch a one, and is too apt to laugh at him. But I tell thee, to be a fool as to eternal things, is much worſe than to be an idiot. The idiot hath few, if any, actual ſins to anſwer for; but thou haſt many. There may be hopes of an idiot's ſalvation, eſpecially if he be the child of a believer; but if thou remain ſpiritually a fool, there's no hope of thee, tho' both thy parents were the beſt of people. All folly is the blemiſh of human nature, but ſpiritual folly moſt of any.

II. YOUNG *people are ſubject to inconſiderateneſs and raſhneſs.* How hard is it, to make you think, or lay the greateſt things to heart? Neither danger, nor duty, do young ones apply to themſelves. Would not the conſciences of moſt of you agree with my accuſation, if I tell thee, child, and thee, young man or woman, Thou art under God's wrath, but wilt not conſider it? Thou doſt not meditate on the way of recovery, tho' it be at great expence provided: Chriſt died for thee, but thou

thou haſt not ſpent one hour in the contemplation of him: Thou art loth to think, what thy ways are, whether good or bad; or thy ſtate, whether ſafe or dangerous. How few young ones here have ſeriouſly aſked themſelves, "Am I born "again or no? what will my ſins bring "me to? what evil is there in my "ſins? when I muſt ſtand at God's tri- "bunal to be judged, what ſhall I anſwer? "what is like to be the iſſue? how ſhall "I dwell with everlaſting burnings?" It is too commonly with others, as it was with that young man, *He goeth after her ſtraightway*, (or ſuddenly,) *as an ox goeth to the ſlaughter, till a dart ſtrike through his liver; as a bird haſteth to the ſnare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.* He took not time to think, what would be the iſſue of ſin: Unavoidable torment gives the firſt proſpect of his danger; when conſideration would have repreſented this miſery, as a guard againſt ſin, even while temptation ſollicited. Prov. vii. 22, 23.

Queſt. WHAT ſhall I a young one do, to deliver me from this *inconſiderateneſs?*

Anſw. IN general, Strive to conſider, and bind thy mind to ſuitable and fixed thoughts. To this end,

(1.) Do not at any time allow thy thoughts to wander unaccountably. It's hard to confine them at any time, when they uſually rove. It's a great help for this world,

world, and for another, to have our thoughts manageable; and our ſouls capable of being eaſily fixed in their contemplations. Whenever thou thinkeſt, be able to ſay, "What I think of is worth a thought."

(2.) AWE thy ſoul with the importance of the things thou oughteſt to conſider. If they be ſoul-matters, they be of the higheſt nature; and they be of the greateſt concern to thee. Tell thy ſelf, "Life "and death depend on theſe: If ſin have "dominion over me, *I ſhall die*; if I am "not born again, *I cannot enter into the* "*kingdom of God.* And ſhall I lightly "think of theſe? what's all the world to "me, if I periſh for ever? Things di- "vine, things on which eternity depends, "muſt be conſidered. Oh my ſoul! wilt "thou, yea, dareſt thou, refuſe to dwell "on theſe, which thou wert made for, "which thou muſt ſhortly converſe with, "as the only realities, whether thou wilt "or no?"

John iii. 5.

(3.) GET ſo much knowledge of what thou ſhouldſt conſider, as that thou mayſt be able to repreſent it to thy mind in ſome evidence. It's hard to conſider long, of what we little know: If it be of God, be not unacquainted with his nature; if it be of Sin, be not ignorant of arguments to diſſuade from it, and a ſenſe of what aggravates it, *&c.*

(4.) LEARN to diſcourſe with thy ſelf, and

and to urge things upon thy heart: This will fix thy thoughts, and bring things with ſome due impreſſion on the heart. If thou canſt not debate the matter inwardly, ſpeak outwardly with thy tongue, as if two perſons were in talk together. "What, ſhall I loſe my ſoul for a luſt? "Muſt not I, if God's word be true, rue "my preſent courſe?" It is God's charge, that *you commune with your own hearts.* He can neither be true nor profitable to himſelf, who ſeldom ſpeaks to himſelf. Pſal. iv. 4.

(5.) TAKE fit time and place to debate, and apply things of moſt concern, and bring things to a good concluſion. Great things muſt not be determined by a few thoughts; for ſo thou wilt neither paſs a right judgment, nor yet be duly affected. Neither are ſerious matters becomingly conſidered in a croud, or when thou art unfit to think: And to conſider, without coming to a concluſion, cannot fix thy judgment, or govern thy will and practice. Therefore if the matter thought of be a doubt, preſs it to a reſolution; if it be a duty, conſider all arguments, till thy will be fixedly determined to do it; if it be a ſin which thou layeſt to heart, ceaſe not repreſenting the evil and danger of it, before thou feeleſt thy ſelf reſolved againſt it, and a ſtrong indignation kindled to ſupport that reſolve.

WILL you reſolve to follow theſe

Rules? will you ſtrive to manage your thoughts, and ſhew your ſelves willing to be conſiderate? I am ſure thou wilt not refuſe, if thou haſt a mind to chuſe aright, to walk ſafely, or to have the benefit of what God hath afforded by natural light, revelation, or providence, to govern mankind by. Yea, young man, it's impoſſible to be truly religious, or to anſwer the great ends of religion, without conſidering.

Prov. iv. 26. Oh then! *ponder the path of thy feet*; maturely deliberate on things that thy thoughts are due to.

III. YOUNG *people are ſubject to be obſtinate and heady.* This is one of your diſeaſes; you break through reſtraints, and are regardleſs of advice; intreaties avail little. Yea, children, though you be compared to tender twigs, do you not diſcover much ſtubbornneſs? Parents command, but you are diſobedient; they correct, but you remain obſtinate; they perſuade and intreat you to be ſober, but you are ſtill vain. Maſters reprove, but you are ſtill the ſame. Miniſters importunately call thee, (oh young man,) from thy deſtructive courſe, but thou paſſeſt on, and ſhutteſt thy ears againſt the word. Conſcience oft ſpeaks, and repreſents thy guilt, but thou ſeemeſt reſolved on thy own ruin. Yea, God ſtands in thy way, as the angel with a drawn ſword; but thou art

art fearleſs, and ſeemeſt to ſay, "I will "ſin ſtill, let *what will* come of it: Let "guilt grow, let God ſtrike, let my ſoul "periſh, all theſe ſhall not alter me." Job xv. 26.

Oh poor ſtripling! how ſoon can God undo thee! how ſoon will hell-torments break thy ſtomach! And wilt thou ſtill be like *the wild aſs, which ſnuffeth up the wind, and in her occaſion, who can turn her away?* How canſt thou, child, endure to hear thy parents groan, "I perſuade my "child to be good, but I cannot prevail; "I would inſtruct him, but he is un- "teachable? Woe is me, I have brought "forth for the deſtroyer, when this my "child was born: I ſee him running "hell-ward, and cannot reſtrain him: I "tremble to think from his ſetting out, "what he is like to come to: Oh that "the fruit of my body ſhould diſhonour "God, as he is like to do! that he ſhould "do the miſchiefs, I foreſee he will! If "God change not his heart, he may come "to an untimely end, and is ſure to be "damned for ever! Oh that I had been "*written childleſs!*" Canſt thou be un- moved, and ſtill perverſe? Jer. ii. 24.

Queſt. How ſhall a young perſon be cured of this *obſtinateneſs?*

Anſw. (1.) Get thy heart poſſeſſed of a *holy fear*. Beg of God a heart that is in awe of him; a heart that reverenceth thy parents and ſuperiors; a heart afraid of

ſin, and trembling at hell, and all the other puniſhments due to ſin. Fearleſſneſs is a great ground of obſtinacy: Young man, theſe deſerve fear; God hath put this paſſion into thy nature, to make thee governable. What horrid madneſs is it, not to fear a God who *is a conſuming fire?* not to fear hell and miſery, which will force thee to *weep and wail, and gnaſh thy teeth for ever?* What confuſion and diſorder is it among mankind, that inferiors are wholly fearleſs of their ſuperiors; eſpecially ſinful worms of a dreadful God?

Heb. xii. 29.

Matt. xxii. 13.

(2.) BELIEVE the *kindneſs* of thoſe, againſt whom thou art obſtinate, and ſtir up ſome grateful returns of *love* to them. Thy perverſeneſs implies, that thou loveſt not thy adviſers; nor thinkeſt that they have any love to thee, when they adviſe thee. But, young body, I would mind thee to day, that it is from love all theſe oppoſed admonitions do proceed.

DOTH not God love thee, who made thee; who put ſuch bowels in thy parents towards thee? Doth he not love thee, who gives thee all the good thou enjoyeſt; who ſpares thee, and intreats thee, month after month, when he might have ſent thee to hell at firſt, without any loſs to himſelf?

DOTH not Chriſt love thee, oh child, who gave his life for thee, when thou wert an undone enemy to him? who ſent his Spirit to ſtrive with thee, his Goſpel to offer

offer mercy to thee, his miniſters and others to teach thee, as ſoon as thou couldſt underſtand any thing? Muſt not he love thee, young man, who pleads with God, ready to cut thee down, *Lord, let him alone this year longer?* Doth not he love thee, that weeps over thee, when he finds thee unperſuadable; and this, becauſe he knows the woful anguiſh thy contempt will end in? Luke xiii. 8.

Do not thy parents love thee? Oh think what care and pains thy father is at for thy livelihood! Think of the tender bowels of thy mother, what ſorrow ſhe hath felt, what fears ſhe is in, when thou art in danger; what tears ſhe poureth forth when thou art ſick, and how it goeth to her heart to correct thee! I might ſhew further, that all others love thee, who adviſe thee to be good.

WELL, young body! canſt thou chuſe but think, that the reproofs of theſe muſt proceed from love? And art thou ſuch a brute, as not to love them at all? What! not love thy God, who is ſo good to thee? not love thy Chriſt, who bled out his ſoul in love to thee? What! not love thy father and mother, to whom thou art ſo indebted? Wouldſt thou be ſo requited, when thou haſt children?

Obj. "I HOPE, I do love God, Chriſt, "and my parents: I am not ſuch a de"vil: And I think, they love me."

Anſw. WHAT! love them, and be obſtinate againſt their intreaties? love them, and be diſobedient in things they moſt inſiſt on? God and Chriſt account *them enemies*, that are rebels: Chriſt puts it plainly to thee, *If you love me keep my commandments*; John xiv. 15. as if he ſhould ſay, Never fancy or talk that you love me, unleſs you will obey me. Thy parents, if they be pious, will reduce thy love to the ſame inſtances: Thus thy mother beſpeaks thee; *What my ſon, and what the ſon of my womb, and what the ſon of my vows! give not thy ſtrength to women:* And ſo too, in the next following words, ſhe forbids *drunkenneſs*: Thy father charges thee, *Hear*, my child, *the inſtructions of a father*; *Let thy heart retain my words, keep my commandments, and live*; *get wiſdom*, &c. They will both intreat thee; "Child, if "thou haſt any love for us, keep from "ſin; ſave thy ſelf from hell: We are "moſt concerned, to ſee thee a real ſaint, "and eternally glorious; we'll bear any "thing rather than ſin; we are afraid for "nothing ſo much as thy ſoul; if thou "deſtroy that, thou ſheweſt the greateſt "hatred, and art as cruel as thou canſt "be, to us."

Luke xix 27.

Prov. xxxi. 2, 3.

Prov. iv. 3, 4.

CANST thou think thou loveſt them, and be thus perverſe? Nay, if thou think they love thee, that muſt cauſe ſome relentings;

ings: "How can I run ſo croſs to my "God, and to my parents, who ſo dearly "love my ſoul, and are ſo ſolicitous for "its weal? My hardened heart begins to "yield, and I cannot continue obſtinate; "my love to them, and my ſenſe of "their love to me, do overpower my "ſtubborn ſpirit."

(3.) BE perſuaded of thy own *ignorance* and unfitneſs to direct thy ſelf. A proud conceit, that you know better than any what is for your good or harm, is included in an obſtinate frame. Doſt not thou think, that if thou wert convinced, that God bids thee do nothing, but what were for thy good, nor forbids thee any thing but what is for thy harm, thou wouldſt do what he commanded, and ceaſe from what he forbids? And would it not be the ſame as to thy parents and others? Let me then reaſon with thee, young man! Doſt thou think, that God would deceive thee, or thy parents and miniſters would lye to thee, when they diſſuade thee from ſin, and perſuade thee to ſerious piety, and are ſo earneſt in it? Thou muſt conclude they think as they ſay: "If they "be not miſtaken, they would encourage "me to do as I do; but if I be miſtaken, "I ought, and would do as they adviſe."

THEN, young creature, the matter is brought to this: Thou art obſtinate againſt counſel, becauſe thou art in the right,

and they that give thee counsel are in the wrong: They, as thou thinkest, advise thee to thy loss; and all things set together, thou consultest thy own true interest better than they do.

But is not this a very vain conceit, and capital error? Oh child! sure thou art not wiser than thy holy parents! They know more than thou, they have experienced what thou hast not; they and thy masters are forced to teach thee the little things of this life; thou wouldst soon spoil and kill thy self, if they left thee to thy own management.

Oh young men and women! are not you sordidly foolish! Can you imagine you know what God will do with you, better than he knows it? do you know what you must lose by sin, and suffer for sin, better than God knows? You judge by a short moment, but he sees what eternity is. You conclude from what your body now feels; but he knows what thy soul is, and what himself is to the soul, whether in wrath or love: He knows what the glory of heaven, and terrors of hell amount to. Thou concludest by thy fancy, but he passeth a just judgment, which every one will soon submit to; therefore I beg thee to distrust thy self, as ever thou wouldst save thy self. Consider, all the *good men* in the world were conceited as thou art now, but they have repented, and owned

owned their folly: When they came to their right minds, then they came to be of God's mind. Yea, all the *wicked* will be convinced of their miſtake; why elſe will they wail and mourn for ever? If it be beſt to be in hell, why ſhould they always complain there! The *prodigal* thought, he was wiſe when he rioted; but repentance aſſured him, he had been mad. Luke xv. 17, 18.

YOUNG folk, have you never ſeen reſolved ſinners, even in ſickneſs and poverty, roar out and mourn at the laſt, ſaying, *How have I hated inſtruction?* Prov. v. 12.

CONSIDER, how unlikely is it, that thy Opinion is truer, than that of thy holy maſter, or miniſter? Thy luſts darken thy mind: They have all the wiſe part of the World on their ſide. Thou canſt remember thou wert as confident of other things, which now thou ſeeſt to be falſe, as they told thee then. Thou ſometimes now condemneſt thy ſelf for thy courſe, when thy ſinful inclinations are calmed. When thou wert ſick, thou didſt own, that thy looſe way, thy irreligious way, *was thy folly*: And after all theſe wilt thou bear it out? Muſt that be thy character, *The fool rageth, and is confident*, while thou *knoweſt not at what thou ſtumbleſt?* Muſt this be written on thy grave-ſtone, *He died without inſtruction, and in the greatneſs of his folly he went aſtray?* Prov. xiv. 16. Prov. v. 23.

(4.) ACKNOWLEDGE thou art one *under dominion*,

dominion, and not at thy own diſpoſal. People refuſe to be ſubject, from a conceit that they have a right to govern themſelves. Is not this your caſe? *Our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?* therefore I will lye, ſwear, talk frothily, let who will contradict.

Pſal. xii. 4.

But, child, thou canſt tell *who made thee*; it was God: And ſhould not he that made thee, govern thee? Ought not the Creature to obſerve the laws which his Creator gives him? Nothing thou haſt is ſo much thine, as thou art his. Chriſt bought thee with his blood, and additionally founded his dominion in his purchaſe: *He therefore died, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living:* Thou art therefore the moſt unjuſt of rebels, if thou art an obſtinate ſinner.

Rom. xiv. 9.

Thy parents, thy maſters, thy miniſters, have an authority over thee; and diſobeying their juſt commands and calls, is a renouncing an authority thou ſhouldſt own, and uſurping a power, to which thou haſt no claim. A maſterleſs child, a maſterleſs youth, is a ſlave under pretence of liberty; and doubleth his yoke while he ſeeks to break it. Therefore know, young folk, you'll find God a terrible judge, whom you rejected as a lawgiver: He'll vindicate his own authority, and the deputed authority of your parents, by the ſoreſt vengeance. Eternal chains ſhall hold that youth,

youth, who would attempt to break God's eaſy bands.

If any of you ſay, "I do own God to "be my ruler and maſter;" conſider God's challenge: *If I be a maſter, where is my fear? ſaith the Lord God of hoſts.* Mal. i. 6.

To finiſh this, How many ſturdy, reſolute young people are here? Will none of your knees tremble? Will love melt no heart? Will a ſenſe of God's ſkill to direct, and authority to command, bend no ſtubborn Will this day? Dare any child or young perſon go hence, and ſay, "I "have been ſtiff-necked, and will be ſo; "nor will I follow theſe rules to become "more perſuadable?" If thou haſt the impudence to do thus, I have God's warrant to tell thee, *Thou ſhalt ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy.* Prov. xxix. 1.

IV. Young *people are ſubject to anger and violent paſſions.* Children are apt to be peeviſh and croſs; young men to be full of rage: The clauſe before the text may be rendered, Oh young man, *put away anger from thy heart.* How ſoon is the fire kindled, how fervently doth it blaze? Young perſons are oft angry with their beſt friends, even for what they ſhould be thankful for; they are incenſed too frequently without a cauſe, and are ſo haſty, as not to ſearch the reaſon. Slight matters are with them great provocations; and moderation

moderation in their reſentments they diſdain. And no wonder, for thy reaſon is darkened from ſeeing the fatal conſequences of thy fury. Laſting enmities, quarrels, murthers, are too frequently the effects of this inordinate fervour.

YOUNG man! is this a thing allowable? Conſider with thy ſelf, anger is a ſhort madneſs. Thou loſeſt the management of thy own ſoul; whence our Lord commands, *In patience poſſeſs your ſoul.* An over-heated ſpirit is void of prudence, and ſure to procure bitterneſs to it ſelf. God ſaith, *He that is ſoon angry, dealeth fooliſhly*; and truly, he that is very angry, is *next to mad*; he looks, he ſpeaks, he acts, too near a lunatick. A paſſionate man is at the mercy of any deſigning foe, and by indulging his anger becomes his own tormentor. How uneaſy to his family, how dangerous to himſelf, how unfit for counſel, how troubleſome to his friends, how inſnaring and infecting to ſociety, is a paſſionate man? May not I hope, you young ones will be out of love with anger? It unmans you, tho' it ſeems brave: It makes you contemptible with the wife. But above all, argue with your ſelves, "This "my God forbids me: *Let all bitterneſs,* "*wrath, and anger be put away.* This "will unfit me for the viſits of the Spirit, "who loves *a calm temper*, and therefore "appoints *meekneſs*, as a qualification for "communion

Luke xxi. 19.

Prov. xiv. 17.

Eph. iv. 31.

1 Tim. ii. 8.

Jam. i. 21.

" communion with him in his ordinances." How lovely is patience? it is the height of fortitude: Yea, God saith, *He that rules his spirit, is better than he that takes a city*; *and he that is slow to anger, than the mighty.* In a word, *a meek and quiet spirit* is an *ornament*, and describes one *blessed.* How amiable is a patient child! he is more beloved by all, than a froward one. How excellent is that young man, who is master of his passion? He is armed against sudden assaults; he is fit for great services and sufferings; he is fit to use the knowledge he hath attained, in the most dangerous passages of his life.

Prov. xvi. 32. 1 Pet. iii. 4. Mat. v. 5.

Quest. What shall a young person do to be healed of *anger* and unruly passions?

Answ. In general, Get the grace of patience, and delightfully accustom thy self to the exercise of it, as what is really thy glory, and no way a reproach. But more particularly,

(1.) Get thy heart filled with love to God and man. Love to God will incline thee to imitate him, who is long-suffering, slow to anger, *kind*, full of love, and good to all. Love to man will incline thee to interpret all to the best; to be afraid to hurt him, willing to benefit and forgive him; and not prone to those dislikes, which are unsuitable to thy fellow creature; especially, if the image of Christ be instamped

Luke vi. 35.

inſtamped on him; as you ſee, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4, 5, 7.

(2.) OFTEN preſent to thy ſoul the example of thy Saviour, and ſtrive to imitate him. He was humble, meek, lowly, and patient under the greateſt provocations. He calls thee to *learn of him*: And if thou haſt any part in him, he hath formed thy ſoul to ſome degree of *imitation*, and to endeavour after more.

Mat. xi. 29.

1 John. iv. 7.

(3.) RECKON on provocations, and be ſtill armed againſt them. Thy own carriage is not ſo inoffenſive, nor are thy acquaintance ſo innocent, but that thou oughteſt to expect ſome trials: And to expect them, and be unguarded, is folly; neither is it poſſible to prevent anger, when wholly unprepared: Therefore awe thy ſoul againſt paſſion, and accuſtom thy mind to ſuch conſiderations as are fit to reſtrain thy ſpirit.

(4.) BE humbly convinced, how mean, ſinful, and ill-deſerving a creature thou art. *Contention* is *from pride*, and he is fondly conceited of himſelf, who thinks he ought to bear nothing; whereas a due ſenſe of thy own nothingneſs, and offenſiveneſs to God, will make thee fit to endure much; eſpecially conſidering, thy provocations from men may be the humbling rebukes of thy God, who muſt forgive thee great things, if he caſt thee not into hell itſelf; yea, whoſe decree it is, *If you do not forgive*,

Prov. xiii. 10.

give, neither will he forgive your treſpaſſes. Mark xi. 26.

(5.) ALLOW not thy froward ſpirit a liberty, even where thou haſt moſt power and freedom. He that is not pettiſh at home, will not be paſſionate abroad; whereas anger indulged among ſervants, and in trifles, will expoſe thee to its power, when more dangerous and indecent.

(6.) WHEN thou feeleſt anger begin to kindle, forbear to do or ſay any thing, till thou haſt well conſidered. The cauſe of thy reſentments, if juſt, will abide the thoughts of a calm temper, and the ways of thy vindication are far likelier to be due; whereas, if the cauſe in itſelf is too ſlight, or thy ſudden purpoſes are too ſevere to be approved, how dareſt thou take blind paſſion for thy guide? Thou muſt believe, that *the diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger.* Prov. xix. 11.

V. YOUNG *people are ſubject to idleneſs and waſte of time.* It's a while before you are fit to learn, or do any thing; but when you are capable, how commonly are you remiſs and ſlothful? Were you left to your ſelves, what would you do beſides eating, drinking, ſleeping, and playing? Thou art put to learn, and thou art idle at thy book; not learning in a week, what thou mighteſt learn in a day, if diligent. Thou art a ſervant or apprentice,

tice, having work to do; but art thou not a waſter of that time, which is thy maſter's, and not thy own; and loth to do the buſineſs incumbent on thee? How little is it, moſt of our youth do for this world, or for eternity? Sports and idleneſs eat up that ſeaſon, which is the beſt opportunity of life; and the character of moſt young people is, to ſpend their time in doing nothing. You are idle in the duties of religion, and waſte that time you pretend to employ with God. You are idle in your particular callings, as if you had *no buſineſs* as inhabitants of this lower world.

Oh young people! how precious is that time you do miſpend? and how ſad an account are you able to give of thoſe hours, which are not to be recalled? Will it be comfortable in this world, to reflect on waſted time? Grown years will be full of theſe reflections: "I might have been a "ſcholar, my knowledge had been im- "proved, I had now been fit to ſerve my "country, and benefit my ſelf and fami- "ly, had I been ſtudious in my youth: "I might have underſtood my trade, been "encouraged in my calling by others, and "laid up for my ſubſiſtence, had I been "diligent and induſtrious in my youth. "But thoſe years are ſpent in folly, and "now I am unteachable; my credit is "gone; ignorance, contempt and poverty

"are

" are my companions : Oh fooliſh I !"

BUT, oh thou child! oh thou youth! how much more uncomfortable on a death-bed, and in eternity, will thy idleneſs and miſpent ſeaſons be, as they refer to thy ſoul? " I had a teachable time, but I die " in ignorance of God and Chriſt : Woe " is me! the ſeaſons of grace I enjoy- " ed are my torment now, becauſe I " improved them not! I hardened my " heart by neglects in my tender years : " How have I trifled, when I heard " ſermons? How have I mocked God, " by my ſleepy prayers? How have I " undone my own ſoul, by a fooliſh re- " miſſneſs in all my ſeeming labours for it? " What can I ſhew for all the years I have " lived? To what a caſe have my ſports, " my idleneſs and vanity reduced me? Oh " that I could recall my precious time! " but that's impoſſible. Oh that I had " profitably employed thoſe miſpent ſea- " ſons! but that's as vain a wiſh. Oh " then that I had never lived thoſe days, " which *I did not live*, but ſinned away, 1 Tim. v. 6. " as one aſleep, or *dead in pleaſure!*"

DAREST thou, O young body, for a little preſent indulgence to thy fleſhly ſloth, entertain thy ſelf hereafter with ſuch heart-piercing thoughts as theſe?

Queſt. How ſhall a young perſon be healed of *idleneſs* and waſte of time!

Anſw. IN general, Abhor *ſloth*, and *re-* Prov. xix. *deem* 15.

Eph. v. 16. *deem time.* Sloth is a wicked unaptneſs for action, and very unſuitable to an active ſoul. Time not redeemed is miſpent; and when it is not applied to its proper work, it paſſeth away to no advantage. And therefore,

(1.) ENQUIRE what is thy preſent work, and be aſſured that what thou art about, is what *God would have thee do.* Every hour hath its buſineſs; if what thou art about be not that buſineſs, meddle not with it, but find out what it is thou oughteſt to be employed in at that time. Conviction of duty is a ſpur to diligence.

Col. iii. 23.

(2.) STILL remember, that God who is thy owner, hath given thee thy abilities, and the time thou haſt, to do thy preſent work. God calls thee as by name, "Uſe my talents to this, which I have "made *thy preſent work*; in this thou im- "proveſt the ſtock I lent thee; in this I "will bleſs thee, and protect thee as one "pleaſing to me; for this thou ſhalt not "fail of a reward."

Eph. vi. 7, 8.

(3.) EXCITE thy ſelf to do what thou art about with vigour. Engage thy ſtrength, call up the powers of thy ſoul to activity; for *the ſlothful is brother to the waſter.* Idleneſs is a degree of omiſſion, in the affairs both of ſoul and body; for there is much undone, that might have been done.

Prov. xviii. 9.

(4.) To this end conſider, God will call

call thee to a ſtrict account, how thy work hath been performed in that time which he affords thee. Tell thy ſelf, "There "is a time of reckoning for this, that I "am now doing or neglecting." The *ſlothful ſervant* is in God's eſteem a *wicked ſervant*; and he that *hid his talent* muſt periſh, as well as he that miſpends it. The *more* good that might have been done in ſuch a day, will be obſerved, as well as what *little* hath been done in that day. Oh never forget, that vacant hours and loiter'd moments are recorded with him, who will not inſpect dreamingly, what thy ſlothful ſpirit makes no account of. Again, Mat. xxv. 26.

(5.) REMEMBER, that all thy works preparatory for heaven, need an intenſe ſpirit, and are confined to a ſhort ſeaſon. It is proper advice, *What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no working in the grave, whither thou art going.* Time is poſting, and we had need redeem it, becauſe our buſineſs is difficult and the conſequences great. There are great things to be acquired and done, before we are meet for glory. There be great oppoſitions in our nature, and from our tempers, to every degree of that meetneſs. A vile heart is not eaſily renewed; darling ſins are not ſoon nor eaſily mortified; the neceſſary faith, knowledge, love, ſtrength, and joy are *hardly* come Eccl. ix. 10.

by; and the expected services in our generation are slowly proceeded in. Haste and eagerness are absolutely needful to such things. He that *idleth*, can hope for little; and trifling in such matters is little better than downright neglect; especially, when *giving diligence* is as much a duty, as doing any thing. He is not upright in the matters of religion, whose deep concern doth not make him industrious; because his judgment never determined for these things as the greatest; nor hath his will resolved the pursuit of them above all others, whose idleness declareth his indifferency. Therefore oft tell thy remiss soul, "This day is "past; that week is over, and shortly "time will be at an end; and shall I idle "as I do? How little work is done in past "years? Dare I to loiter still, and be sur-"prized, while my works are so imper-"fect? Or can I reckon on greater im-"provements in the same number of days, "if I be no more intent and industrious "than I have been in those?" To thee is that directed, *Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord:* Resolve then to obey it.

2 Pet. i. 10.

Rom. xii. 11.

(6.) Be able to give a good account to thy conscience, of the time that's laid out in sleep and recreations. These are the common wasters of time, by a disregard to their just bounds. Many do almost divide their hours between sleep, and recreating

creating ſports, viſits, and talk; which three fall under this head of recreation. It's an awful conſideration, that what are appointed only to fit men for buſineſs, ſhould become with many their only buſineſs; as if they had little elſe to employ themſelves about. But know thou, young man, that he who *ſleepeth* longer than health requireth, is a *ſluggard*; and he that lays out more hours in diverſions, than prepares him for the better diſcharge of duty, is a miſpender of time. Thy reaſon ſhould tell thee, "God would "never have given me a ſoul endowed with "ſuch abilities for ſervice; he had never "placed me in a world full of opportunities "and calls to employment; he had never "charged me to be diligent and uſeful; "if I am able with comfort to plead my "ſleep, and pleaſures, as the greateſt part "of my exerciſe while I lived."

Prov. vi. 9.

ATTEND to theſe rules with care, and from this moment *gird up the loins of thy mind*, as one determined to run thy chriſtian race with intenſeneſs and haſte.

1 Pet. i. 13.

VI. YOUNG *people are ſubject to levity, and inordinate mirth.* This is a common diſtemper. Your talk is frothy and unſavoury: How far from grave are you, in your carriage, or dreſs? Vain books thou loveſt to read, idle tales thou likeſt to hear, fooliſh ſights thou art beſt pleaſed

with, foolish songs thou greedily learnest: What airy conceits is thy imagination filled with? These thou indulgest, till they become the guides of thy practice, and the chief object of thy thoughts and discourse; to say nothing of thy instability, excessive laughter, vain jestings, merriments, *&c.*

Oh young ones! is this a temper to be allowed? It is condemned by all prudence; it's contrary to all that is serious, and obstructs all improvements in wisdom. How
2 Sam. vi. 20. odious is the character of *a vain fellow*? How do God and angels despise thee; how do the good and wise compassionate thee? yea, canst thou refuse to be angry with thy self? Reason a little with thy own soul: "Have I not better things to think "of, than these silly matters, which tend "to no good for soul or body? Do not "these antick gestures make me ridicu- "lous? What hurt to others, what a "wound to my self, comes by this frothy "talk? Is not my mind grosly vain, that "I can relish such fooleries? Can it ever "be bettered, while I employ my self in "nothing but what is foolish?" Dost not thou find, that this lightness is even risen to profaneness? Thou canst ridicule the Scriptures, sport with the divinest subjects, and turn the most serious matters into fuel to thy childish conceits. Poor wretch! God will force thee to be serious, by the torments he'll shortly inflict. Thou wilt be

be convinced, that thy atheiſtick thoughts have not put God out of his throne, tho' they caſt thee out of his favour. Thy ridiculing of religion hath not made it leſs real, or neceſſary, though it hath excluded thee from all the bleſſings of it. Thy *making a mock at ſin*, hath not a jot leſſened its evil, but expoſed thee more to the vengeance due to it. Thy jocular temper ſhall not delay the awful recompence of that contempt, wherewith thou haſt treated the graveſt matters. What is more fit to make a ſerious heart bleed, than to ſee thee jeſt and fool thy ſelf into eternal flames? How *ſurpriſing* will thoſe torments be to a poor creature, that always diſdained a ſober thought? Prov. xiv. 9. Luke xii. 46.

Queſt. How ſhall a young perſon be healed of this *levity* and inordinate mirth?

Anſw. In general, Follow after *ſobriety* and *diſcretion*. The want of theſe is evident in thy frothy behaviour: And a total want of them is unbecoming thee, in the moſt early exerciſe of thy reaſon; much more in improved age. The gravity of an old man cannot be expected in a child; but a degree of it is neceſſary to the youngeſt, that is capable of acting by the notice of a diſcerning mind. What is thy reaſon for, but to diſcern what is meet, direct thee to what is fit, and govern thee in thy carriage according to the rules of thy condition? *Diſcretion* will 1 Pet. iv. 7.

tell thee, that a godly book is more profitable than a play-book; that the ſoul deſerveth more care than a periſhing body, which will ſhortly be meat for worms; and that ſilly tales edify not, as wiſe diſcourſes. *Sobriety* will direct thee, to endeavour a demeanour becoming a man rather than an ape; it will check thee in thoſe jeſts which diſcover thy vanity, as well as expoſe a chriſtian name; it will urge thee to refrain matter of future ſorrow, for the ſake of that contemptible pleaſure which thou takeſt in indulging a light fancy, while more important things are not regarded. To this end,

(1.) OFT repreſent to thy ſelf thy condition in this life. Sure it muſt conduce to ſerioufneſs, when thy mind is accuſtomed to ſuch thoughts, as thy preſent ſtate ſuggeſts. Oh young man! thou art born *a child of wrath:* Thy nature is vicious, the *condemning ſentence* was paſſed on thee by the very law of innocency: Death is juſtly fearful; thou art in a ſtate of trial, and on thy good behaviour for an endleſs joy or miſery. Thou haſt contracted much guilt by thy actual enormities and omiſſions: Satan, the world, and thy own luſts, are active to fix the curſe, and prevent thy reconciliation with God, by keeping thee in a ſtate of infidelity, impenitence, and diſobedience to the goſpel. Thy exerciſes as a chriſtian are difficult;

Eph. ii. 3. Rom. v. 18.

cult; if thou art *ſaved*, it muſt be *ſcarcely*: And many endeavours for ſalvation do prove ineffectual, becauſe a perſeverance in ſo many things is eſſential to determine thy ſtate. Alas! of *many called*, how *few are choſen?* Multitudes of profeſſors miſcarry; ſeemingly ſtrong hopes are oft deluſive: *The heart is deceitful above all things, and ſo deſperately wicked*, that it may well be aſked, *who can know it?* Theſe, and the like things, may call thee to mind thy ſelf, and be a means to lay that froth, which argueth ſmall ſenſe of thy bleeding wounds, and of the ſlippery paths, diſadvantages and dangers, attending thy caſe in this life, as it leadeth to eternity.

1 Pet. iv. 18.

Mat. xxii. 14.

Jer. xvii. 9.

(2.) DELIBERATELY propoſe a becoming end in all thy words and actions, and let them be conducive to that end. To ſpeak or act thou knoweſt not why, is a reproach to thy prudence; and ſo it is, to ſpeak or do things to an end which they are not fit to ſerve. Neither is it becoming a ſerious perſon, to intend that which will put him to the bluſh, while he deliberates of it. I can hardly think, thou dareſt ſay to thy ſelf in thy cloſet, "I'll "ſpend ſo many hours to day, in ſhewing "my own folly, or gratifying another's "madneſs: I'll lay out my pains, to di-"vert my own mind, or another's, from "all that is ſerious; to make my heart "vainer

" vainer than it is; to furniſh my ſelf with " thoſe falſe notions of things, which I " muſt with trouble unlearn before I be " wiſe; and to ſtrengthen that levity, to " which I am already too prone." Canſt thou reſolve, " I will ſpend this week, " in trimming a poor carcaſe, and neglect " my ſoul? Let this ſhift for itſelf, as to " any care of mine, unleſs it be to add " to its hurt, by the ſnares which my vain " converſation ſhall expoſe it to." But if thy deſign be what's edifying, thou canſt not imagine a courſe of foolery will ever accompliſh that deſign. Yea, this very fixing on warrantable purpoſes, will gradually diſpoſe thee to ſerioufneſs.

(3.) REMEMBER thou art ſtill under the obſervation of ſuch, as ſhould awe thee to ſobriety, and make thee aſhamed and afraid of a frothy behaviour. Thou wouldſt be aſhamed, that a wiſe friend were acquainted with all thy light fancies and talk, but one day. Oh! forget not, that *God trieth the reins*, and *knoweth all thy thoughts*. Poor youth! is not the eye of thy God and Judge, more than all the world? Holy angels are not always ſtrangers to thy carriage, and diſcourſes; and mayſt thou not bluſh at their remarks? Devils do oft impreſs thy fancy, and put thoſe things into thee, which thou thinkeſt and talkeſt of; theſe enemies of thine do gladly behold thee unmanning thy ſelf, wounding

Pſa. lx vi. 18.

wounding thy ſoul, and corrupting others with thy fooliſh ſpeeches and actions. Thy ſilly companions obſerve thee, and receive the contagion to which their own inclinations make them apt. And is it nothing with thee, that thou converſeſt with people ready to be diverted from ſerioufneſs, and forward to be vain by thy example? Alas! thou becomeſt acceſſary to all the evil they ſhall propagate; and wilt be condemned in their thoughts, if God give them repentance, or curſed by them in hell, if they die impenitent. Thy ungrave deportment ſometimes is ſeen by ſuch as are wiſe and good; and thoſe deſpiſe thee, and pity thy madneſs, when thou pleaſeſt thy ſelf as being airy and witty.

(4.) Be not an unconcerned ſtranger to the ſtate of the world, where enough daily occurs to make thee ſerious. Canſt thou be light, and altogether vain, in a world ſo full of ſin and miſery? How many diſmal objects doſt thou ſee and hear of? what cruelty in one man to another? How oft is the church oppreſſed? what judgments and calamities are thy neighbours under? what dangers is the land of thy nativity expoſed to? Moſt of the earth *lies* in ignorance, idolatry, and ſubject to the devil's empire. How many ſouls are bemoaning their own ſins, and ready to deſpond under doubts and fears? Where is there a family, but groaneth under

1 John v. 19.

der ſome diſaſter? And canſt thou play the buffoon, as if childiſh toys diverted thee from all ſenſe of theſe things?

(5.) Awe thy ſoul with the importance of ſacred things, ſo as not to dare to entertain a light thought concerning them, much leſs to ſpeak jeſtingly of them. Every ſcripture-truth is a beam of divine light; it's revealed by the eternal Spirit to mankind, for to *direct* their faith and practice: And dare a poor worm that ſhall be judged thereby, affront heaven by ridiculing its diſcoveries? Young man! that cannot be matter of jeſt, which the holy wiſe God is intent on, and the hearts of all devout perſons are deeply exerciſed with. Are ſuch things to be ſported with by man, which the very devils tremble at? Canſt thou chuſe but be ſeriouſly affected with the matters of religion, if thou believe, theſe are the things which the incarnation, ſufferings, death, and teſtimony of the Son of God refer to? Theſe are the things, which great miracles have atteſted; theſe are the things, which the various operations of the Holy Ghoſt on ſouls deſign, and the miniſtry of angels ſubſerve; theſe are the things, which the devil is ſo induſtrious to oppoſe; theſe are the things, a goſpel-miniſtry is eſtabliſhed for, and about which all pious miniſters are ſo intent and importunate; theſe are the things, which moſt affect, and govern all ſuch,

2 Tim. iii. 16.

ſuch, who are freed from the dominion of their luſts, and can die with hopes; theſe are the things, which if totally diſregarded, expoſe mankind to all brutiſh villanies in this world, and endleſs tortures in another.

(6.) ABSTAIN from the ſociety of light perſons, and obſerve the danger of exceſſive mirth. There's that levity in thy temper, which infers danger by vain perſons; and thou art inconſiderate, if the latter doth not force thee, to ſay *of laughter, it is mad*; *and of mirth, what doth it?* Yea, *ſorrow is better than laughter*; *for by the ſadneſs of the countenance, the heart is made better.* Eccl. ii. 2. Eccl. vii. 3.

(7.) ACQUAINT thy ſelf with thoſe purer and higher joys, which a ſerious temper leads to. There be delights of a higher nature, than what thou purſueſt; *they* would ſoon render theſe unſuitable to thy taſte, as well as contemptible to thy judgment. No holy young man would exchange *the feaſt* of his heavenly father, for thy ſwiniſh *huſks*; there's no preſent emptineſs, nor following bitterneſs, in ſpiritual delights. The ſenſe of God's love, peace of conſcience, the lively hopes of glory, the ſatisfaction of well doing, the ſerenity of a compoſed ſoul, the eaſe of a rectified nature, as far as the faculties are delivered from ſin and healed by grace, do conſtitute a delight ſo real and refined, as if thou once taſte, will make thee reflect Luke xv. 16, 23.

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on thy paſt joys with ſhame and diſdain. See *Pſal.* iv. 6, 7. and *Cant.* ii. 3, 4.

VII. YOUNG *people are prone to lye.* This ſin appeareth in childhood, and then ſuch a habit is contracted, as they hardly are delivered from. It's now true of many,

Pſal. lviii. 3. *They go aſtray as ſoon as they are born, ſpeaking lyes.* You lye to your parents, to excuſe your faults: You lye to God, in breaking your baptiſmal vow. You lye to your equals, for pleaſure, or gain: You ſpeak falſely, to revenge your ſelves on ſuch as you are angry with. Oh how oft do you ſpeak otherwiſe than you think, and contrary to what you know, deceiving them to whom you ſpeak!

CONSIDER, thou child, lay to heart, O young man; that lying is a horrid ſin.

John viii. 44. Herein thou imitateſt the devil, who *is the father of a lye*, and the firſt lyar. Thou art

Prov. xii. 22. contrary to God, who is a *God of truth*; to him *lying lips are an abomination:* He is ſo incenſed by this ſin, that he allots

Rev. xxii. 15. *every lyar his portion* among the worſt of ſinners. Oh child! wouldſt thou get to heaven? then thou muſt not lye. Art thou afraid of burning in hell for ever? then fear a lye. Wouldſt thou be a child

Iſa. lxiii. 8. of God? he tells thee, his *children are ſuch as will not lye.* It's the charge of

Eph. iv. 25. God to thee; *Put away lying, and ſpeak truth.* Dareſt thou ſay, "I will not re-

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" gard what the Lord ſaith to me!" Alas! he will puniſh thee for a lye, worſe than thy father or maſter can puniſh thee for any fault.

YOUNG men, allow not your ſelves in this iniquity. Let no maſter force you to lye in your trade; much leſs do you uſe it in your diſcourſe: It's a mean thing, it's deſtructive to human ſociety, and the bane of converſation. What is a greater reproach, than to be a lyar? What is eſteemed a worſe affront, than to ſay *thou lyeſt*? Great are the miſchiefs to men's repute, eſtates, peace, by a falſe tongue; and in vain are all pretences to religion, if *the tongue be not bridled* as to this fault. How hateful is it to debaſe ſo noble a thing as ſpeech, in deluding thy brother in thy communication with him! Jam. i. 26.

Queſt. How ſhall a young man be preſerved from *lying?*

Anſw. (1.) LOVE truth, and deſpiſe what would allure thee to quit it in thy ſpeech. It's the character of him that ſhall inhabit God's temple, *He ſpeaketh the truth in his heart.* To ſpeak the truth argues a plain man, an honeſt man, an heroick man, and generally a godly man. Therefore, like it in thy ſelf, as thou muſt do in another. In order to this, get rid of ſlaviſh fear, which induceth to lying excuſes: Hate pride and vain glory, whence all lyes for oſtentation proceed; Pſal. xv. 2.

trample

trample on love of filthy lucre, and thou wilt not lye for gain; abhor a hurtful envious ſpirit, which will prevent thoſe lyes that are framed to the damage of thy neighbour.

(2.) BE wary, and thoughtful of what thou art about to ſpeak. He that ſpeaks *haſtily*, is in danger to ſpeak *falſly*; and having uttered one lye in haſte, is too apt to back it with more: Whereas he that is ſparing in his words, doth not eaſily betray truth; and he that conſiders, dares hardly utter a falſe thing. Who will venture to lye, that ſays within himſelf, "God hears "what I am going to ſay, and he will "judge me *by my words?*" This reſtraint on thy ſpeech is ſo needful, that thou ſhouldſt pray, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips!*

Pſal. cxii. 3.

(3.) LET the lyes thou haſt uttered at any time, be matter of deep humiliation. Repenting ſorrow for what's paſt, will be a ſtrong caution againſt the ſame fault. Thy grief for it will make thee earneſtly pray with *David*, (whoſe fault this was,) *Remove from me the way of lying!* They ſlightly confeſs a lye, who can perſiſt in the practice of it.

Pſal. cxix. 29.

(4.) TAKE heed of equivocation, which is ordinarily downright lying. What is blamed in *Jeſuits*, is too uſual among Proteſtants: As if a poor artifice would compenſate for truth. To conceal thy meaning

meaning where thou doſt not owe a diſcovery of it, is warrantable; but to impoſe deluſion under pretence of truth, is intolerable, eſpecially where rules of juſtice are violated. How ſad is it to obſerve the liberty ſome take in deceiving their friends with ambiguous words, which they hope will be interpreted contrary to what they know to be true?

(5.) Do not be encouraged by reports, to publiſh what thou haſt not juſt reaſon to believe. What falſe ſlanders do ſome utter on incredible evidence? *Report, ſay they, and we will report it*; as not daring to invent the lye, yet not ſcrupling to repeat what they more than ſuſpect to be falſe. But learn thou, never to ſay any thing of thy enemy, upon worſe teſtimony than thou wouldſt believe it of thy friend. Jer. xx. 10.

(6.) You that are ſubject to correction, be watchful and innocent in your carriage, that you may not need to lye. Do nothing that thou needeſt be afraid to own. This will prevent falſhood; and thy fear of being put to lye, may guard thee againſt many irregularities.

HERE I would adviſe parents and maſters to encourage truth, by abating ſomewhat of ſeverities for faults, that are plainly confeſſed. And I wiſh, buyers by their backwardneſs to give a juſt price, would not tempt the ſellers to lye, in bargaining for their goods.

VIII. YOUNG *people are ſubject to fleſhly luſts, eſpecially uncleanneſs.* This head concerns perſons paſt childhood, and therefore I direct it to young men. You are not ignorant, that your appetites are unruly, and your inclinations too laſcivious. In eating, you are prone to gluttony: Exceſſive drinking is too common a fault; there be many drunkards ſhort of twenty years old: And voluptuouſneſs ſeems the Idol, whom our ſtriplings worſhip above the living God.

UNCLEANNESS is thy raging diſeaſe. What immodeſt dalliance, what filthy thoughts, what obſcene ſpeeches, what wanton looks, ſelf-pollution, yea, actual fornication, doth conſcience charge ſome of you with? How few *poſſeſs their veſſels in honour*, or arrive at manhood without a forfeiture of chaſtity?

1 Theſ. iv. 4.

THOU that art apt to drunkenneſs, or gluttony, oughteſt to conſider, what theſe vices are; and how vile thou rendereſt thy ſelf, by indulging thy ſelf therein. Sure thou forgetteſt thou art an embodied ſoul, while thou art led by thy brutiſh luſts. The name of Chriſtian ill becomes thee, *whoſe God is thy belly.* Where is thy reaſon, that thy appetite ſhould thus rule thee? What is thy conſcience, that fails to terrify thee out of ſins, ſo undoubted, and dangerous? Shall God put thee off with a portion that becomes a beaſt; and when thou

Phil. iii. 19.

thou aſkeſt heaven, reproach thee with *faring ſumptuouſly every day, and receiving thy good things in this life?* Luke xvi. 19, 25.

Oh drunkard! how odious art thou to all that behold thee? How ſubject to do and ſuffer the worſt of miſchiefs? Thy enemies have an advantage to betray thee; Satan may eaſily perſuade thee to the greateſt of ſins, when thy ſoul is in no caſe to ſee the temptation, or the conſequences of it. What ſecret art thou able to keep? What buſineſs art thou fit to do: How do reproach and penury wait thy perſiſting in this courſe? But above all, doſt thou lay to heart, that God is incenſed againſt thee? He left it a rule to *Iſrael*, that the young man ſhould be *ſtoned*, againſt whom his parents witneſſed, that *he was a glutton and a drunkard:*. And 'tis the ſanction under the goſpel, that *Drunkards ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God.* Is thy pleaſure worth the pains thou muſt endure, or the loſs thou ſhalt ſuſtain? Deut. xxi. 20. 1 Cor. vi. 10.

Oh unclean perſon! how diſmal is thy caſe? This luſt blindeth thy judgment, and ſeareth thy conſcience, ſo that miſery becomes unavoidable by ſtupidneſs in ſin. How dareſt thou worſhip a holy God, while thou walloweſt in thy pollution? Doth not thy filthineſs make God a terror to thee in every duty, as well as defile the duty by the wandrings of a vile imagination? The holy Spirit is *quenched* by

1 Cor. vi. 19. luſtful motions, and *cannot dwell* in a heart ſo unclean. Thou profeſſeſt to belong to Chriſt's body; hear the Apoſtle's
1 Cor. vi. 15. expoſtulation, *Shall I take the members of Chriſt, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid!* How oft, O young man, hath the Spirit of God reproved thee? How oft hath conſcience bitterly warned thee? And dareſt thou waſte thy body, debauch thy mind, ruin thy eſtate, deface all hopeful impreſſions on thy ſoul, and renounce Chriſt, for a baſe luſt? Wilt thou defy God to avenge thy affronts, and for ever undo thy ſelf, and them whom thou allureſt to partake in thy laſciviouſneſs? If
Rom. xiii. 13, 14. not, admit that as a holy reſolve, *Let us walk honeſtly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenneſs, not in chambering and wantonneſs; but put ye on the Lord Jeſus.*
Rom. i. 26. Take heed, leſt *God give thee up to vile affections.*

1 *Queſt.* How ſhall a young perſon be delivered from *gluttony and drunkenneſs?*

Anſw. (1.) SET thy ſelf to get the maſtery of thy *appetite.* Reaſon with thy ſoul, and cry earneſtly to God, that *this* may not be thy ruler: None would be a glutton or drunkard, but that his appetite hath more power than his reaſon; and conſcience is too weak to reſiſt the cravings of his luſt. Moſt young people are pleaſed, that the beaſt ſhould rule the man; they quietly yield up themſelves to

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the empire of this brutal part; they can bear no check to it, they are afraid it ſhould come under reſtraints. But, Oh young man! thou art carnal or ſpiritual, as thy appetite or ſanctified reaſon governs thee: Much of a chriſtian's warfare conſiſts in the ſtruggle between theſe; the inordinate appetite is a great part of that *fleſh*, which *luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and is contrary to it.* Is it not high time, thou ſhouldſt ſet thy ſelf to contend with this enemy, and attempt to bring it into ſubjection? This is temperance, when thou canſt reſtrain its irregular motions, and deny its cravings. Oh then, daily quench this fire; and preſs after that ſobriety, which implies a moderation of ſoul to the objects of ſenſe, and a government of our life by the will of God, and not by fleſhly deſires. Let it then be thy buſineſs in every duty to weaken this tyrant, and the ſcope of thy life to deliver thy ſelf from the power of thy appetite. Gal. v. 17.

(2.) MAKE no proviſion *for the fleſh, to fulfil its luſts.* It's afflictive to behold ſome perſons contriving for their bellies, as if careful for nothing elſe. The deſign of their labours, and the thing that makes riches valuable with them, is, that they may pamper the fleſh, and fulfil its deſires. But reſolve with thy ſelf, thou wilt not miniſter to this flame, nor live as if catering for the fleſh were thy principal employ- Rom. xiii. 14.

ment in this world. Prepare what is meet for thy body; it's a mercy in our pilgrimage to have the conveniencies of life; but exceſſes are fitteſt for them who dare
1 Cor. xv. 32. brutiſhly ſay, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.* Poor worms! is there nothing after death, that they ſhould live in preparation for? yea, is not life it ſelf as bad as death, while it ſerves to no higher an end? Nay, theſe voluptuous courſes do often ſo enfeeble nature, and multiply diſeaſes, that life is a burthen, and ſome beginning of hell in bodily torments.

(3.) AVOID temptations, according to thy weakneſs to reſiſt them. He that is prone to ſlip, ought the more carefully to look to his ways. Is gluttony thy crime? be afraid of feaſts. Art thou apt to be drunk? look not at the wine when it ſparkles. Refrain the company, in compliance with whom thou haſt ſo oft offended. Knoweſt thou not, that *the companion of riotous perſons ſhameth his father?* It's in vain to pretend, "I will not be "drunk, though I do aſſociate with them "that will perſuade me to it." How oft haſt thou reſolved, and yet complied? nay, thy delight in the ſin is plain, in the choice of ſuch aſſociates; and thy luſt is ſtrong enough to prevail when the temptation offers, if it be able thus before-hand to lead thee into the occaſion.

Prov. xxviii. 7.

(4.) FORCE thy ſelf to an abſtinence from

from juſt liberty for ſome time, when the ſtrength of thy luſt is found to abuſe what is otherwiſe lawful. Some people are ſo exorbitant, that if they drink any wine, they muſt drink to exceſs; if they go into a tavern at all, they cannot forbear drunkenneſs: If that be thy caſe, do not deſpiſe it as below virtue, for a while to drink no wine at all, or wholly to forbear a tavern or alehouſe. It is thy miſery, that what is to another man lawful, is to thee a ſnare; but it is thy duty and wiſdom, to manage thy ſelf with a regard to thy weakneſs, that thou mayeſt by degrees get rid of thy wickedneſs.

(5.) Be intent by watchfulneſs and hard ſtruggles to oppoſe thy luſts, till time and frequent repulſes abate their power. An appetite long indulged, is not ſoon brought under the power of the ſoul. It will be importunate and uneaſy, even after its dominion is removed; much more, while the conteſt for ſuperiority between it and grace is undecided. Therefore ſink not, as if it were in vain to ſtrive; nor let the uneaſineſs of the ſtruggle, tempt thee to give it over. For as yielding to the fleſh makes it more impetuous, ſo frequent denying it will abate the ſtrength of its motions. Many drunkards, after a while, become rid of all inclinations to be drunk; and ſobriety grows ſo habitual to them, as if exceſs had never been their

temper. Oh children! never make your cure hard, by beginning a wicked cuſtom: Oh young men that are inſnared! grieve not to be at due pains, nor patiently to wait the ſtopping of the courſe of ſin, which you have ſtrengthened by frequent compliances. Thou muſt ceaſe to be a drunkard, or thou art miſerable for ever. And thou muſt be at all the labour here adviſed, and be willing to continue it till thou art reformed, or a drunkard thou wilt be ſtill.

2 *Queſt.* How ſhall a young man be delivered from *uncleanneſs?*

Anſw. The former directions are proper to this caſe: I ſhall apply ſomewhat of them, and add ſome more rules.

(1.) Awe thy ſoul with the purity and perfection of God's law, as it refers to this ſin. It's a great ſnare, to miſtake a precept, and confine it below God's explication of it, or intention in it. Yet how many young people allow themſelves in degrees of uncleanneſs, as innocent; not ſeeing, that theſe things are comprehended in that precept, *Thou ſhalt not commit adultery?* Therefore young man! examine the word more ſtrictly, and thou wilt find, that God hath provided againſt every degree of uncleanneſs, and againſt all that leads thereto. Are thy hidden thoughts and motions free? No; *the thought of fooliſhneſs is ſin:* Our Lord reproves the Phariſees

Prov. xxiv. 9.

Phariſees as hypocrites, becauſe *their hearts were full of uncleanneſs*; and *evil concupiſcence, inordinate affections*, &c. are to be *mortified*. Are thy luſtful gazings on a woman allowed? No; our Saviour expreſsly ſaith, *He that looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*. Mayeſt thou talk obſcenely? No; *neither filthineſs, nor fooliſh talking, nor jeſting, are convenient, nor to be once named among Chriſtians*. If the command of God reach to theſe leſſer degrees, ſure thou art not ſo ſtupid, as not to ſee that all groſſer acts are forbidden, as more abominable. And if marriage be the remedy againſt incontinence, thou dareſt not think that God allows thee other ways to gratify thy luſt, and ſo fruſtrate the great ends of that ordinance, and the aptitude of human nature for it. Mat. xxiii. 27. Col. iii. 5. Mat. v. 28. Eph. v. 3, 4.

(2.) Be watchful againſt all occaſions of uncleanneſs. Nouriſh not luſt by an intemperate diet. He had need be free from fleſhly inclinations, who dares ſtrengthen the aſſaults of the fleſh againſt his chaſtity. The Spirit of God tells thee, that *if wine prevail, thine eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women*. Be not in the reach of a woman that will entice thee. *Joſeph* eſcaped the ſnare by *flying* from his miſtreſs, and refuſing *to be with her*: Whereas the young man that admitted the *ſpeeches* of the immodeſt woman, was ſoon *inſnared*. Venture Prov. xxiii. 33. Gen. xxxix. 10. Prov. vii. 21.

ture not on thy own ſtrength too far: God may juſtly leave thee, when thou tempteſt him; and ſtronger than thou art, have ſadly rued the power of occaſions. Play-houſes, mixt dancings, *&c.* have been the ruin of many youth.

(3.) GUARD thy ſenſes. Theſe are inlets of evil; by them objects inſnare, and kindle thoſe luſts which lay aſleep. *David*'s eye betrayed him into adultery. *Job* is to thee a good example, who ſays, Job. xxxi. 1. *I have made a covenant with mine eyes.* Liſten not to immodeſt ſongs, or leud diſcourſe; which inſenſibly ſtir up thoſe inclinations, which tend to the vileſt acts.

(4.) STIFLE the firſt workings of luſt. Firſt motions are weakeſt, and ſo more eaſily conquer'd; the longer they are entertained, the more violent they grow, and the ſoul leſs apt to oppoſe them. Filthy contemplations allowed, darken the mind, and abate that dread and abhorrence which are a great part of thy ſecurity againſt ſin. Oh then cruſh the firſt appearance! If thou aſk me, how? I'll tell thee: Baniſh theſe evil thoughts out of thy mind: Plead God's command, and ſeek his help: Repreſent to thy ſelf the threats and puniſhments of God againſt this ſin: Conſider, that theſe motions unreſtrained, may end in the groſſeſt action; and reſolve, not to ſpeak a word, to glance one look, or uſe one

one geſture, in compliance with that ſinful motion.

(5.) AVOID idleneſs, as that which tempts the devil to tempt thee. Young man! it's a great mercy to the world, that we have buſineſs to follow; and he that hath no employment, will wiſh hereafter he had never had an eſtate to prevent a calling; therefore, be ſure thou haſt work to do, and attend it. Sin eaſily entangleth the idlers, who will be doing wickedly for want of buſineſs: But the diligent is not at leiſure for vain thoughts, he needs not inſnaring company to divert him. Labour ſubſtracts matter from luſts, and renders the body leſs diſturbing to the ſoul. Leiſure hours are the young man's danger. Be not deſirous of too many ſuch, and double thy watch in the ſpending of them: For Satan obſerves thee then, and will ſuggeſt vain thoughts to thy mind, excite fleſhly motions, and prepare inſnaring opportunities.

(6.) ATTENTIVELY regard, and yield up thy ſelf to the motions of the holy Spirit. The Spirit will warn thee againſt theſe defilements, and direct thee to that purity of heart and life, that will prevent the advantages the unclean ſpirit finds in thy youthful age. A reverential regard to the preſence of the Spirit, will call thy mind from baſe employs, and excite thee to what is approved by him: And the more

more his fruits abound, and expreſs themſelves in thy temper and carriage, the more effectually wilt thou be cleanſed from all thy fleſhly pollutions. To this we are di-
Gal.v. 16. rected in that exhortation, *Walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh.* Yea, the aids and influence of this holy one are neceſſary to a ſaving abſtinence from, and dominion over luſts;
Rom viii. 13. as you ſee from that of the Apoſtle, *But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live.*

(7.) KEEP thy thoughts well employ'd. This will prevent thoſe vain imaginations, which are the incentives of luſt; and by which the judgment is blinded, or
Col. iii. 16. bribed to perſuade the will. *Let the word of Chriſt dwell richly in thee,* by filling thy mind. Contemplate God in his perfections; behold him preſent with thee, when in the greateſt ſecrecy. He makes a third, when thou and thy paramour are moſt re-
Jer. xxix. 23. tired. In this caſe he teſtifies, *Even I know, and I am witneſs, ſaith the Lord.* Repreſent to thy ſoul the torments following theſe luſts, if gratified. Hell-fire is enough to quench theſe luſtful flames; and who dare wiſh the pleaſure ſo dearly bought?
Heb. xiii. 4. Attend to ſuch ſcriptures, as, *Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge,* &c. Oh young man! canſt thou think of this believingly, and caſt off reſtraints, or give a carnal mind its ſcope?

(8.) RESOLVE

(8.) RESOLVE before thou complieſt with the moſt urgent temptation, to put up a ſerious prayer to God in Chriſt. Lay thy ſelf under this law, "I will not conſent, before I look to God." It muſt be a dreadful evil, that will not admit an addreſs to Chriſt. If it be a ſin, I have need of ſtrength from him, who came on this errand, *to put away ſin*, to *cleanſe from iniquity*, and *deſtroy the works of the devil.* (Heb. ix. 26. Eph. v. 26. 1 John iii. 8.) Prayer may deaden the temptation when ſtrongeſt: It may recover thy baffled power; for Chriſt is able to inſpire thee with that light and vigour, as may ſupport thee when thou art almoſt gone. St. *Paul* prayed *thrice*, when grieved with a thorn in the fleſh, and *the grace of Chriſt* proved *ſufficient for him.* The devil, the fleſh, and an enticing object, are too hard for any man, that calls not in the help of Chriſt by prayer. Satan deſires no more, than to engage thee ſingle: And without frequent ſupplications, thou art like to be ſo. On the other hand, prayer will drive Satan to ſome more ſubtle aſſault, than ſo groſs a wickedneſs as uncleanneſs muſt appear to every one, that beholdeth Chriſt when calling on him. Therefore, I do again intreat thee, even when thy luſts ſeem to have moſt advantage, that thou wilt not forget to preſent thy caſe to him, who is concerned for thy good, and able

2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

to

to foil the enemies of thy ſoul, when in the greateſt proſpect of ſucceſs.

THUS have I repreſented to young people ſome of the ſins, to which your age is moſt ſubject. All are not named: Alas! there's *Swearing*, which is a prophane villany, that hath neither pleaſure nor profit to allure. There's *Theft*, which is a violation of juſtice, and a diſcontent with what God hath thought fit to give you. There's *Pride*, (one inſtance whereof I ſhall hereafter ſpeak to,) which among you children and youth is generally upon very ſordid accounts: You are proud of a little beauty, which the ſmall-pox may ſpoil, and no body is truly the better for: You are proud of your fine clothes, and from pride deſire them; but what trifles are theſe? none but fools eſteem them, or value thee the more for them.

THOUGH I cannot inſiſt on theſe, yet if God is pleaſed to deliver thee from ſuch ſins as I have mentioned, all others will be reformed. Oh then ſet thy ſelf againſt them. Let the youngeſt be warned againſt theſe, as what they will feel temptations to: And be all reſolved, faithfully to obſerve the directions given; that if poſſible, you may arrive to middle age, free from the corruptions of childhood and youth, and not be forced to cry out with bitter reflections, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the*

the iniquities of my youth. What would an aged saint give, that he had been innocent of all these crimes while he was young? Learn wisdom by such now, while thou hast opportunity and warnings. Job xiii. 26.

I NOW proceed to the second head of the vanity of childhood and youth, *viz.*

SECONDLY, *Children and young people are apt to live to no valuable purpose, which is vanity.*

THOU wilt easily allow, that to spend ones strength and time for nothing, or what is as good as nothing, is vain. Is not he a vain body, that thinks much, talks much, and doth much, to no purpose? Common opinion will grant this. We brand *Caius Caligula* as vain, for bringing a great army to the sea-shore, and gathering cockle-shells, when he pretended a great attempt. The Spirit of God justly accuseth these persons; *Behold, they are all vanity, their works are nothing.* *Solomon* doth frequently mean this in his book of *Ecclesiastes*, when he saith, *This also is vanity*; that is, it's to no valuable purpose; it is not worth the labour and concern a man is at: One had as good let it alone, and be unemployed, as reap no other fruit. Isa. xli. 29.

YOUNG people! this is your very Case: Most of you live, and busy your selves for nought.

1. You

1. You are apt to design nothing at all in your living. It's long before thou askest thy self, "What do I live for? what "end shall I pursue?" Are not most of thy actions performed, thou knowest not why? Most of you are hurried by a foolish temper, allowing no deliberate design to govern you. A vain mind, or devilish suggestions determine the actings of most young people. Is not this a reproach to thee, If thou happen to do any good, it's more by chance than by thy choice? If thou receivest any real advantage, it's by a merciful providence, and not by thy intention. If God should ask thee at the church door, Wherefore comest thou hither? May not some of you say, "I do "not know: It was from a fancy I had "to hear, or from custom." But how few can say, "I had a design to get some "help to grapple with my youthful lusts; "I proposed to meet with God in his word "for my soul's improvement." When you intend so little in an ordinance, what purposes must govern you in the ordinary affairs of life?

2. Your youth is spent to no considerable purpose. May not I tell most here, Thy time past is lost, and the time to come is like to be lost? For,

(1.) Thou hast lived in vain, as to *thy self*. What hast thou gotten by the ten years

years thou haſt lived, O child of ten years old? What haſt thou improved by the fifteen years thou haſt lived, O youth of fifteen years old? Yea, may not I as juſtly aſk the young man of twenty, What haſt thou done? what uſe haſt thou made of thy twenty years? Muſt not conſcience anſwer, "Oh! I had as good been juſt "now born, for any good I have got-"ten!" That I may faſten this conviction, I call every ſoul to anſwer me; What art thou nearer God to this day? How much is ſin mortified? What grace haſt thou attained to this very time? Oh youth! haſt thou yet got an intereſt in Chriſt? What treaſure haſt thou laid up in heaven? If thou muſt own, "I am "further from God, and not nearer; "ſin is ſtronger, and not weakened;" then ſure thou wilt own, thou haſt lived in vain to thy ſelf. But farther,

(2.) How many *others* may lay to thee the charge of unprofitableneſs? Thou liveſt in vain, as to *God*. He may ſay, "This "young man never ſerved nor praiſed "me; I had as good there had not been "ſuch a youth in the world." Thou liveſt in vain, to thy *friends*: Thy *parent* may ſay, "It is an unprofitable child "to me; I have yet had no comfort by "him." Thy *relations* may cry, "He "never gave us good counſel or ex-"ample." Thou liveſt in vain, to thy

maſter: He hath got little advantage by thy care, or labour. Thy *miniſter* may cry, "This young body brings me little "joy as yet; I have ſtriven to little pur- "poſe with him; he ſeems as if I had
1 Theſ. iii. 5. "*laboured wholly in vain.*" Thou haſt lived in vain, to the *church:* What increaſe, or glory, hath it reaped by thee? Thou haſt lived in vain, to the *nation:* Thou haſt not helped to make it, more innocent by thy life, more flouriſhing by thy induſtry, or more ſafe by thy prayers. So that now, young man! is it not a true charge, which I lay to thee? and mayeſt thou not cry out, "Oh uſeleſs I! "I have lived for nought; I have been
Luke xiii. 7. "an uſeleſs ſhadow; I have *cumbered the* "*ground*, and God may juſtly cut me "off as an unfruitful one?"

Obj. I FORESEE ſome young one will be ready to evade this charge, and ſay, "I do live to ſome purpoſe that is valu- "able: I gratify my ſenſes, I live plea- "ſantly, I begin to mind and look after "the world, *&c.*"

Anſw. ALAS, poor creature; is living to the fleſh valuable? is living barely to this world valuable? is living to the devil valuable? Methinks thy reaſon ſhould tell thee, it's better not to live at all, than to live to theſe. An intelligent ſpirit to live to the fleſh, is baſe: An immortal ſoul to live

live barely to this world, is madneſs: A creature of God, redeemed by the Lord Jeſus, to live to the devil, is ſelf-deſtructive, and fooliſh. What! live to him, who hath undone thee in the Fall, and is ſo ſtudious to prevent thy recovery by Chriſt! live to him, who hath blinded, blemiſhed, and debaſed thee, as he hath done! live to him, who though he hates thy God, cannot eſcape his own miſery! live to him, who envieth thy good, deſires thy woe, oppoſeth all that is the benefit of mankind, and contributes to all the miſeries and diſorders which the world is diſtreſſed by! Oh young man! canſt thou juſtify this courſe of living?

But this will more appear, if upon a due reflection on thy life, thou wilt anſwer me theſe queſtions.

[1.] Doth thy life anſwer God's end and purpoſe in giving thee a being?

The wiſdom of God may aſſure thee, he had an end becoming himſelf in thy creation. He tells thee, *All things were created by him, and for him.* Col. i. 16. The bleſſed God had an eye to himſelf, and a regard to Chriſt the Redeemer, in giving thee an exiſtence. He exerted his power in thy being, that thou mighteſt ſerve and honour him: Doſt thou anſwer this end, by living as thou doſt? haſt thou ever aimed at this? doth thy behaviour contribute to

this at all? Thy way of life would be a reproach to thy maker, to have propoſed it to himſelf in thy creation.

[2.] ARE there not greater purpoſes, to which thy nature and abilities are ſuited?

HE lives to no valuable purpoſe, that neglects to live to the *higheſt* purpoſes he is capable of. Little things are a reproach to him, that is adapted to great things. Have not you faculties to know and love your God? and do your childiſh or wicked employments anſwer them? You are capable to ſerve, and glorify the bleſſed God; and is the gratifying thy luſts equal to theſe? You are receptive of divine joys; and are thy carnal merriments anſwerable to theſe? Oh young body? what uſe art thou fit for to *others?* what benefit doſt thou yield to *thy ſelf?* How canſt thou ſeem to anſwer theſe, by a trifling diverſion, or a periſhing advantage? Sure, thy capacity is thy ſhame: The very beaſt, that liveth to the utmoſt of his power, will witneſs againſt thee, who behaveſt thy ſelf ſo much below thine. It would have been thy mercy, whoſe exerciſes have been ſo low, that thy abilities had been leſs. Hence,

[3.] WILT thou not ſhortly acknowledge with ſhame and grief, that thou haſt lived to unvaluable purpoſes?

No miniſter's rebuke will be ſo ſharp as thy

thy own, when grace renews thee, or endleſs torments overtake thee. If the Spirit ever enlighten thy mind, and alter thy will, we may aſk thee, *What fruit had you of thoſe things, whereof you are now aſhamed?* Rom. vi. 21. With a grieving bluſh thou wilt anſwer, " Nothing I dare boaſt of, no- " thing I can juſtify. I am aſhamed of " my reward, as well as my labour. What " I reaped by my ſin is my ſhame, as well " as ſin it ſelf. It was a fool's diverſion, " wherewith I pleaſed my ſelf; it was my " blemiſh, wherein I gloried; it was my " loſs, whereby I valued my ſelf. What " are they now to me? They are *dog's* Phil. iii. " *meat* [σκυβαλα] to what I now taſte. I 8. " am aſtoniſhed, that I could reliſh thoſe " unſavoury things, or derive the leaſt con- " tentment from them, when my chief " good was unſecure." Young man! if grace do not awaken thee, Hell will. This and the *never-dying worm* will be convic- tions, of the emptineſs of what thou haſt purſued, and of the baſe purpoſes thou haſt lived to. How will they tear thy ſoul with ſuch thoughts as theſe? " Where's " the pleaſure now? Where's the ſa- " tisfaction, to which my endeavours " were confined? Oh that I had been " but a beaſt, who have lived to deſigns " ſo bruriſh! Oh that I had no intellec- " tual nature, ſince I ſtudied not to know " my God, and the way of Life! Oh

" that I had been void of rational powers,
" ſince I did not govern my ſelf accord-
" ingly ! Oh that ever I had natural abi-
" lities to love and fear, ſince I have not
" loved my God, nor ſo revered him, as to
" abſtain from vanity ! Woe is me, that I
" had a capacity for any ſervice, ſeeing I
" have lived ſo uſeleſsly to God, to my
" friends, and to my ſelf! Alas, where is
" the fruit of my labour! What now do
" I enjoy, that deſerved one hour of my
" life, or anſwers the leaſt of my abili-
" ties !" Theſe, theſe, oh child ! will be the effects of thy preſent way.

THIRDLY, *Children and young people are apt to live to* deſtructive *purpoſes, which is the height of vanity.*

THE laſt head is convincing, that it were *as well* thou hadſt never lived; but by this it were *far better* for thee, thou hadſt remained mere nothing to this day. To live to hurtful ends, is worſe than not living at all. Yet this is your condition; you diſhonour God, you provoke the eyes of his glory, you trample the blood of Chriſt under your feet with contempt. How many young people ſerve the devil with their ſtrength, and are a ſnare and infection to all they can influence ? One young body ſpoils many others, and leads them to that villany they had never thought of.

YOU

You oft break your *parents* hearts; and they by thy means feel, that *a fooliſh ſon is the heavineſs of his mother.* Prov. x. 1.

You frequently deſtroy your *maſter*'s eſtate. To the ſerious, you are a grief; to the city and kingdom a plague, as helping on its ſin, haſtning its puniſhment, and obſtructing its good. How many may complain of harm on thy account?

But whatever hurt you bring to others, ſure you avoid miſchiefs to *your ſelves?* No, no: Young men live moſt to their own hurt, and ſeem to take great pains to make their miſery ſure and great. Oh, vain youth! thou daily makeſt thy ſelf more the child of wrath by thy ſinful practices; thy wicked habits grow more ſtrong. By idleneſs and frequent oppoſition, hopeful principles are more baffled and expelled. Conſcience by thy affronts, is leſs concerned, and capable to admoniſh thee. Thy ill treatment of God's Spirit makes him withdraw, and his viſits are more ſeldom; ſo that he is ready to ſay of thee, *Let him alone.* Hoſ. iv. 17.

Believe it, careleſs youth! thy ways tend to more ſin, and leſs hopefulneſs of grace and glory. Oh, wretched life! to live only to be more guilty, and to be expoſed to greater puniſhments. Thou runneſt hell-ward; thy thoughts tend there, thy words lead there, thy vile actions heap

Rom. ii. 8, 9. the greater ſtore of eternal flames. *Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh*, are the things thou workeſt for: Thou laboureſt for theſe wages; thou delivereſt thy ſelf daily to a greater obnoxiouſneſs to theſe woes; as if thou wert afraid thou ſhouldſt not be miſerable enough.

Oh ſoul to be pitied! *Not to be born* had been thy mercy, as well as *Judas's*; unleſs thou change thy living. Is it not to thee Iſa. xli. 24. thoſe words are proper, *Behold you are worſe than nothing*, מאין? Hadſt thou not lived at all, thou hadſt not done the miſchief thou art now doing, thou couldſt not have felt the hurt thou muſt ſhortly endure. How may moſt young folk bemoan the day of their birth! their life is a miſery, which might have capacitated them for the bliſs of angels, had they well employed it. The Lord grant, you be not found thus fooliſh, and cruel to your ſelves! But to this you are more prone, than to a more profitable courſe.

My next work is to ſhew you, 1. *How childhood and youth became thus vain?* 2. *Why they continue ſo?* 3. *How moſt young people grow ſtill vainer?*

1 Queſt. *How comes it to paſs, that childhood and youth are vain?*

Anſw. Childhood and youth *became vain* by *original ſin.* There's the ſpring

ſpring of the diſeaſe: Thou didſt not come out of God's hand thus prone to ſin, and thus averſe to himſelf; but a depraved nature deſcends to thee from *Adam*, by the line of thy anceſtors. Thou waſt born under the infection common to mankind, generated in the ordinary manner; the very quickened Embrio in the womb hath all the ſeeds of thoſe ſins, which time ripens, and opportunity brings forth. Our conſtitution is become ſinful, and all corrupt effects are next to natural.

I SHALL not trouble you with diſputes, but merely inform you, (1.) How our nature *became corrupt:* And (2.) How it *deſcends thus corrupted* to thee.

(1.) OUR nature *became corrupt*, or vain, by the entrance of ſin; whereby the divine image was expelled, as well as forfeited.

A RATIONAL ſoul cannot be void of moral qualities and diſpoſitions, as it is a ſubject of God's moral government. There muſt be wiſdom, or ſinful ignorance, in the mind: There muſt be love or enmity to what is good, and averſion or inclination to what is evil, in the will. For man is not conſidered in God's law, merely as an agent with reſpect to what he occaſionally acteth; but he is conſidered alſo as to his temper, *what he is*; what are his governing principles, and prevailing diſpoſitions. Theſe are neceſſary to the denominating him a godly or ungodly man, as well

well as influential into the ordinary course of his actings, which will be answerable to his inclinations and light.

ADAM was created *after God's image*, which consisted *in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness*. Gen. i. 27. Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10. This was his constitution; tho' not so fixed, as to prevent the possibility of sinning. And while *Adam* sinned not, our nature was impressed with that holy power, light, and love, which answered the law, and capacitated us for that exact obedience enjoined by it. These divine qualities are inconsistent with their contraries, by the *law of innocency*; tho' they are not incompatible, by the *law of grace*. For that law insisted on perfection, and entire innocency; and fixed a forfeiture of all holy gifts, by man considered in *any* degree sinful. Yea, besides this forfeiture of these gifts by the penal sanction of the law, man was not entitled to those aids of the Spirit, whereby divine qualities might subsist in the same soul with contrary sinful dispositions, as they do under the law of grace. No such influences of the Spirit were provided in the law of creation. And therefore, as the least sin in the soul brought down our holiness below perfect, and thereby made it cease to be holiness by the rule of innocency; (for love was not love by that law, if there was any mixture of enmity against God;) so Sin would prevail

vail to extinguish that Purity, and expell those holy dispositions at first implanted, if once it entered into the soul.

ADAM did subsist a while happy under this law: But at last he sinned. His heart turned from God to the creature; which implies ignorance in the mind, and aversation and enmity to God in the will. The entrance of these did of course deprave the soul of *Adam*; knowledge was expelled by darkness, corruption removed his original purity. The disease invaded the whole man, the poison operated to the extinction of his glorious excellencies. There was no need for God to take any good out of the human nature; it necessarily died by the force of sin: And it is by a new grant, that there be any remains of good in lapsed man. It is not from any thing in man, or in the first covenant, that there be any moral virtues, or good nature in any: God in mercy bestows these, and restrains the growing contagion of sin, that we become not more devilish.

WHEN holy light and love were expelled by sin, the appetite (of course) became master of our reason, and all disorders hence ensue. The soul being clothed with flesh, doth for want of holy principles become subject to sensible inclinations, which thro' the presence of agreeable objects, hurry poor man into all that is flesh-pleasing; while the proper concerns of the soul are forgotten,

forgotten, and its intercourſe with unſeen things is cut off, for want of that light which ſhould perceive them, and that holy love which might reliſh and deſire them. A ſoul thus debaſed and entangled, becomes little better than an active power to contrive fuel for our various luſts, and receive the little delights which are miniſtred by ſenſe and fancy. Oh wretched ſtate! eſpecially when error, and enmity againſt God and holineſs, help to compleat its depravedneſs.

(2.) THY nature *deſcended thus corrupted* to thee, as propagated by the appointed law of natural generation.

ADAM was not only the common head of mankind, as repreſenting all mere men, but alſo he was the original of all men in order to propagation. As repreſentative, he was capable to forfeit much good. As he was the common parent, he muſt tranſmit the nature which he had with its impurities. He was to propagate his kind, and begat *Seth in his own likeneſs*; which is oppoſed to *the likeneſs of God*, wherein *Adam* was made: Though *Seth* was the father of the holier part of the world, and a good man; yet he was not begotten after God's likeneſs, or with a nature in its original purity, but with a nature as depraved in fallen *Adam*. Lapſed corrupted nature cannot propagate a holy nature: For *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*

Gen. v. 1, 3.

Job xiv. 4.

Or,

Or, *how can he be clean, that is born of a woman?* A person *naturally sinful*, cannot generate a child free from that sinfulness: If the father be naturally void of spiritual wisdom, the son in the course of nature will be so. And if we are born void of wisdom and holiness, we must be vain, foolish, and ungodly; for human nature must be unholy, if it be not holy. This made *David* own, *I was shapen in Iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.* This is so fixed a rule, that our blessed Lord must have an extraordinary generation, to escape the pollution of human nature: *Mary was found with child of the Holy Ghost*; the Spirit *overshadowed her*; and this Christ is the only one *born holy*. Others are made holy by grace: Some, it may be, are renewed in the womb; but none are naturally so, or by ordinary generation. Therefore if thou shouldst ask, *Why do not good men naturally beget good Children?* I answer, Their goodness is superadded to their nature, it comes by another law than that of nature; their grace is from Christ, for the salvation of their own persons, but not to propagate to their offspring by generation.

Job xxv. 4.

Psal. li. 5.

Mat. i. 18. Luke i. 35.

Oh young man! thou seest, how thou groanest under *Adam*'s fall, and labourest under the depravedness of human nature, as propagated from *Adam* by thy ancestors down to thee! And is there ever a child here,

here, but is a living witneſs to this corruption? Are you not all proner to ſin, than holineſs? Is it not eaſier to make you vile, than to make you gracious? Do not fewer and weaker arguments incline you to be wicked, than to be godly? Is there not that in thee, which ſerves inſtead of a tempter to evil, tho' there were no ill example or ſollicitation from without? Wert thou ever ſenſible of this, oh child? Haſt thou been yet truly humbled for *original ſin?* Thou waſt wicked while an infant, as to the temper of thy ſoul; the corrupt nature thou then hadſt, is the ſpring of all thy vanity. Thy nature is, to be fooliſh, to lye, to be unclean, and what elſe is vile. That nature, while unrenewed, will expreſs its unholineſs and enmity againſt God, one way or another. It's true, the power of one contrary luſt may bridle or deſtroy another: Thy bodily conſtitution, God's reſtraints, education, *&c.* may prevent the raging of ſome luſts; but the malignity continueth, and cannot fail to govern, till the grace of Chriſt do alter thee.

2 Queſt. *Why do childhood and youth continue vain?*

Anſw. CHILDHOOD and youth *continue vain*, for want of a *due uſe* of the *means* appointed for their healing. O young people, here are three things in this, that are very fit to move you.

(1.) HERE's

(1.) HERE's comfort, that the vanity of youth is *healable*. Thy case is sad, but 'tis not desperate. There's *hope in Israel*, concerning the recovery of sinners in their youth. The devils became wicked, and never can be recovered; they may grow viler, but they can never grow better: But blessed be God, this is not thy case. Thy wound, though sad, is yet curable. There have been many young folk made pious and serious. *Isaac* was good betimes; *Timothy* and *John* were old disciples, before they could call man; *Josiah*'s tender years were impressed with grace. I have known undoubted evidence of grace before ten years old. Oh then you need not resolve to be vile, because 'tis in vain to attempt to be good. No, no. No young persons in this assembly need to say so, or need to think so. God has not resolved against young persons, that they shall never be recovered; nay, he has determined, that *out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he will perfect praise*. Children! our Lord Jesus has never said, I will have nothing to do with such as you; I'll neither wash you, nor heal you, nor teach you: Nay, he has said quite otherwise, *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, &c.* The Spirit of God never resolved, I will convince no wicked children, I will sanctify no profane youth: Nay, instead of that, to you he says, *Come, ye children, hearken*

Mat. xxi. 16.

Mat. xix. 14.

Psal. xxxiv. 11.

hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. The Spirit has a mind to be the teacher of children, and the inſtructer of youth; he has a mind to train up the young generation for heaven, as well as the old ones. So that young ones may ſay to day, "Why, though I am "wicked, yet there's hope; and though "I have a vile nature, yet there's hope. "I may be recovered, even though my "whole frame ſeems thus ſet for villany, "and appears thus deſperately diſpoſed."

THERE is the firſt point, and that's a great matter; and under the power of that, I preach to young ones; under the hopes, that you young ones will regard what I ſay, and urge; for the caſe of youth is *healable.*

(2.) HERE's a loud call to you, that *God uſes means* to heal young ones of their vanity. This confirms the former. Is God at pains with youth to make them better? then there is hope of youth; for God would not be at this labour, if it were wholly uſeleſs. O my friends! God has ſent his Son to die for young children, as well as old men; even young ones re-
1 John ii. 12. ceive forgiveneſs by his blood: *My little children, your ſins are forgiven you for his name's ſake.* The Spirit of God ſtrives with many young ones, as ſoon as they can underſtand any thing; he bids early for your compliance. I believe, there is not

not a child of six years old under the gospel-means, but the Spirit of God has been striving with. This holy one can truly say, I have been dealing with this child to make it happy.

PRAY let's a little consider: Thou child or youth! hast thou had no sense of hell's misery ever upon thy heart? Hast thou never been convinc'd, that 'twas ill to lye, or swear? Hast thou never found pressing motions to be good, and to resolve against evil? have no good desires stirred in thy soul? Why, all these were the workings of the Spirit of God on thy poor soul. God has been labouring with every young body in this congregation. He has been labouring with thee, by the advice of thy parents: When they taught thee to read, or taught thee thy catechism, or instructed thee to pray, it was God by them was taking pains with thee.

WE Ministers preach to you young ones, as well as to the old. Nay, we preach *to you* with more hopes, expecting that you are not hardened as old persons are. Young people, consider! have not the *mercies* of God, have not his preservations of you, been so many teachers? What has been the language of every mercy to thee, child, to you, young ones, but this? "Oh children! don't you provoke "this God; don't make me your enemy; "for you see, I would fain do you good,

" I would fain be merciful, and not a de-
" ſtroyer of you." Nay, have not *afflictions* been the pains of God with you? Is there ever a young one here, that has not been ſick at one time or other? why the Lord ſent that ſickneſs to thee, and ſpake in this manner thereby, " I will warn this
" young one to be religious, leſt he ſhould
" die before he be converted." All the *corrections* of thy parents, and maſter, for thy ſin, have all been the calls of God; and his language in them all has been, " I
" would fain imbitter ſin to this poor
" young one, by ſomething ſhort of hell:
" I would gladly reſtrain the wickedneſs
" of this youth, that I may not damn
" him."

You ſee, you had need look to it, for God has uſed means towards your recovery. Think not, " God doth not mean *me* in
" his word." Don't ſay, " God did not
" intend *my* cure in the helps I enjoy." But believe, he intendeth thee as well as any other. It's thy enlightning, O young man! that he intends by all his teaching. 'Tis thy converſion, O young woman! that he deſigns by all his calls. All theſe have been directed upon this very deſign; and leſt you ſhould doubt it, the Spirit of God does particularly name you: *Young men and maidens, praiſe ye the Lord*; and *young men* are exhorted *to be ſober minded*. Nay, Chriſt himſelf tells us, in the beginning

Pſal. cxlviii. 12. Tit. ii 6.

ning of the *Proverbs*, that his great design there, is, *to give discretion to the simple young ones.* Therefore I beg, that not one young body in this place may forget what I now say, That they frustrate God's hopes, if they be not good; and disappoint him of all his labour, if they be not gracious: All the pains that have been taken with them, are lost upon them. And will God bear this? What will become of you, if you proceed this way? Prov. i. 4.

(3.) HERE's an awful charge, that you young men continue vain, because you don't *rightly use the means* for your healing. Ah, sad charge! The case of young ones is curable, but *why* is it not altered before now? Why, O conscience speak! Children, you have consciences; young ones, you have consciences; can you say, "It is long of God I am vile "still? 'tis long of the want of means, "that I am vile still?" Ah, friend! The Father, Son, and Spirit can all say, "It "is not my fault, that this child is bad "still; it is not my fault, that this young "man and woman is wicked so long; "it is not long of me." May not the Spirit of God say, "I have taken more "pains with this child, and spoken oftner "to this young person, than I have done "with thousands in the world." Alas! So it is concerning every one of you. Children of Pagans never had thy helps, in

all their days. Consider a little with your selves, God may this day say, "I began "early with this young one; I have still "pleaded after many a repulse, I have "followed him and her, from day to day, "and from sin to sin: Oh how earnest "have I been with this young stripling, "that I could propose very little good by; "yet have I taken pains and labour with "him." Come, young people, Is it now to begin, that God has cry'd to you, *Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will you die?* Is it now the first time, that he has said unto you, *Will you not be made clean? when shall it once be?* Has Christ never said unto thee, *Look unto me, and be saved!* look unto me for help, for there's help no where else: Thy distress makes me needful, and pity makes me willing.

Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

Jer. xiii. 27.

Isa. xlv. 22.

Lay these things to heart, and I will defy any young body in this place, to go away, and say; "I have lived up to "what I know, I have improved all that "God has afforded me, but he denied to "give me more: I am miserable and "wicked still, because God has refused "to help me, when I have sought it of "him." Is there any that can talk at this rate? No, not one.---Not one? Why then, whence is it that we have so many young people bad still? why still so fatal to thy self? why a slave to base lusts? O

friend

friend! God knows the cauſe, and thou knoweſt the cauſe: Thou didſt not uſe the knowledge thou haſt; thou didſt not improve thy opportunity. Doth not conſcience witneſs, Thy ear has not been opened, thy heart has not been attentive, *thou didſt not frame thy doings to turn unto the Lord?* God can ſay this day, "This "poor creature might have been in a good "caſe; he would have been ſerious be- "fore now, if he would but have yielded "to my pleadings, if he would but have "turned at my reproofs. This young "body would have been an eminent "Chriſtian before now, had all my im- "preſſions been retained, and all my calls "complied with: He had known me "better, had he been but as teachable in "my ways, as he was in other things: "*But he ſet at nought all my counſel, and* Prov. i. 25. "*would none of my reproof.*"

Hoſ. v. 4.

Oh then, young people! conſider with your ſelves, what has been your caſe: You have told God plainly, *I will not come to thee, that I might have life.* Where's the young body, that has not practically given God a denial? Every time thou waſt under conviction of Sin, and didſt not leave it, thou didſt tell God; "Lord, "I would be thine, but I love my ſin "better: I would be happy for ever, but "I will not, unleſs I may be wicked in "this world." The youngeſt here hath

John v. 40.

the great hand in his own ruin; he that is but of ten years old, if he periſh, he is his own deſtroyer: (I think it's true of many younger.)

CHILDREN! You were born vain, and you have wilfully choſen to remain ſo. You may be ready to accuſe *Adam*, by whom you became wicked; but it is your own fault that you continue wicked, ſince God hath provided a remedy. It's your ſin, that you are no better for mercies, no better for afflictions, no better for means; wicked before, and wicked ſtill.

OH therefore! what will you be able to anſwer? How ſad is it! that any young body here ſhould be forced to ſay, "Lord, "'tis my fault, that I am no better for a "Chriſt, and no better for the goſpel; "my miſery is of my own chuſing; God "has taken pains with me, but 'tis all loſt "through the obſtinacy of my will."

THESE three things are plain under that ſecond head, wherein you ſee, why young people remain vile and vain.

3 Queſt. *How is it moſt young people grow ſtill vainer?*

Anſw. YOUTH becomes yet more vain by *evil cuſtoms*, and indulging *carnal ſelf*. Vanity unhealed is of a growing nature; and there is no bad child, but grows ſtill worſe. Sin is not a ſtream that grows empty, or a root that dies by mere time: God

God knows, we have had experience of that. Alas, how doth villany grow with years! The child that began with few ſins, grows up to many ſins; inſomuch that we have ſome young men before eighteen, have committed as great ſins as the man of eighty. Youth enters with leſſer ſins, and proceeds to groſſer ſins. We have many young people that ſeem to abound in wickedneſs, as they advance in age; as if they grew older, only that they may grow viler. Oh, what a mercy would have it been for ſuch, to have died in the womb! or any one year before another! Now, Sirs, whence is it? how can it be, that young people ſhould grow thus vainer and vainer, inſtead of better and better?

I TELL you, One ſin brings on another; and by the leſſer, thou art fitted for a greater. Sinful habits are ſtrengthened by ſinful acts; and fear, and ſhame for ſin wear off, yea, are even extinguiſhed by a courſe of ſin. O poor ſoul! Satan has got the faſter hold; the Spirit has been provoked, and given over ſtriving; and it may be, thy parents through deſpair, have almoſt given over praying. *Conſcience* that warned thee, is *fear'd* and ſilenced, and ſo the wicked creature has his full ſcope. God ſays of him, "Let this poor creature "alone, *I'll ſtrive with him no more.*" O young folks! you may be hardened be-

1 Tim. iv. 2.

Gen. vi. 3.

fore you grow old; luſt may be ſtrongly rooted before old age; and I fear 'tis ſo with abundance of youth. Is it not ſo with ſome of you? Did not ſome of you bluſh at a little ſin, and now thou canſt mock at great ones? Are there not ſome among you, that once dared not to tell a ſmall lye, and now you can lye all ſorts? Are there none here, that trembled when they ſwore a little oath, and now can ſwear at the bloodieſt rate, and add blaſphemy and curſing to their oaths? Sirs, did not ſome of you feel a check for a light act, and now you can commit fornication and uncleanneſs without any inward rebuke? It was hard to bring thee to pilfer a penny, and now thou canſt ſteal ſhillings and pounds. It was with much ado, that thou couldſt endure to be drunk in the night; but now thou canſt do it openly, and glory in it. Thou durſt not formerly have neglected a ſermon, and thou muſt pray by thy ſelf; but now, alas, poor creature! thou canſt play away a whole ſabbath, and ſpend weeks without prayer, without one ſerious prayer. My friends, what's the matter? Is ſin grown a leſs evil? By no means. Is God, and heaven, and hell, leſs certain? No, no, ſirs, you will feel it to your coſt. Is thy poor ſoul leſs precious, and leſs valuable? No, this is not it neither. But the reaſon of it is this, wickedneſs is grown by wickedneſs; committing

ſin

ſin has made it eaſy; the current of ſin running, has made the channel wider, and the oppoſition leſs. Oh, therefore, for the Lord's ſake, begin this day to conſider, the devil is grown more impetuous by thy conſent: And I can tell thee to day, and let the youngeſt of you obſerve it, If thou continueſt wicked, thou wilt be yet more and more ſo; and thou wouldſt now bluſh to think what wickedneſs thou wilt hereafter come to: As *Hazael*, when it was foretold him by the Prophet what cruelties he ſhould commit, cries out, *Is thy ſervant a dog, that he ſhould do this great thing?* 2 Kings viii. 13.

THUS I have finiſhed what I intended in the explication; and now,

I come to the USE.

Firſt, By the way of *Inference:* May the Lord ſet it home! Some owned great good on this day twelve-month; may more receive good to day! The inferences then are theſe.

Inf. 1. How diſmal a ſight doth this truth afford us of the world? *Childhood and youth are vanity.* Ah, Lord! How true then is it, that even *the whole world lies in wickedneſs?* The greater part doth ſo; for young people are many more than old ones. The chief part of age is vanity; the beſt part of time is vanity: *Childhood* is the time fitteſt to learn in; *youth* is the 1 John v. 19.

time

time fitteſt to act in; and yet both theſe are *vanity*. Oh, how little are heavenly deſigns carried on by young ones? Oh, how little is God worſhipp'd and ſerved by young ones? how few of them are engag'd in their own true concerns? Dreadful! that in youth we *will do* nothing, and in age we *can do* nothing! Oh, who loves God, and is not grieved? who loves ſouls, and is not melted? All come *ſick* into the world, and moſt men grow more diſeaſed by their ſtay here. All come *miſerable*, and moſt help on each other's ruin, and increaſe their own. Oh, how many go off the ſtage, and have reaſon to wiſh, "Would to God I had periſh'd, "before I ſaw the light!" So like Hell is this preſent ſtate, that it's a wonder we are able to take any delight therein. God is ſerious with people in their younger years, and they heed it not. Miniſters are earneſt with young people, and they regard it not: Ah, poor wretches! they think we have nothing to do with them. Oh, young ones! Help us to mourn to day: For I am calling on men to *mourn for you*, who in your youth yield your ſelves up to your luſts, and thereby are injurious to Chriſt, and cruel to your own ſouls; and will *you* be unmoved?

Inf. 2. WHAT care is incumbent on *parents* and *maſters*, in the managing of young perſons? Youth is vain, and that beſpeaks

beſpeaks a ſuitable carriage. O *parents*, you don't beget angels, but ſinful children; you breed up corrupt ones, and not perfect ones. Few are ſanctified in the womb, and therefore you ſhould deal with children, as with depraved and corrupt perſons, as with them whoſe childhood and youth are vanity. The very diſtemper directs *parents* and *maſters* in their duty and carriage towards their children: I ſhall eſpecially name *parents* in my directions.

(1.) *Children are ignorant*; oh therefore take occaſion to inſtruct them. Alas! canſt thou let thy children be unacquainted with God, and inſenſible of their own miſery, or of the way of their eſcape? What, muſt thy child be inſpired, or it muſt *periſh for want of knowledge?* If it muſt *know*, pray who is fitteſt to teach it? upon whom does it lie in point of duty, as it does upon you? And who has the advantage of doing it as thou haſt? Who is ſo like to prevail with thy child as thy ſelf? None faithfully dedicates his child to God in infancy, that will not carefully inſtruct him when of age to learn. Hoſ. iv. 6.

(2.) *Youth have unruly appetites*; and therefore don't indulge them. Oh that every *parent* here had but his heart open to what I ſay! and I ſpeak it out of pity to the ſouls of young ones. 'Tis an ill practice in parents, to feed their child by the cravings of its luſt, and not by their

their own judgment. I will tell you the miſchief of it; beſides the laying a foundation of diſtemper in age, it gives the appetite an ungovernable force. Children being always indulged in what they crave, cannot deny themſelves any thing they deſire: And by the ſame rule, that they muſt now eat and drink what and when they will, while they are under your care; they will be drunk and whore, *&c.* when they grow in years. Their reaſon cannot bridle their appetite then, if yours (which ought to guide them) neglect to do it now. Oh dreadful thing! that any children's appetites ſhould come from under their parents tuition unbridled. I look on nothing as a greater reproach to parents. And what's the ground of all wickedneſs in the world, more than an inordinate appetite? yet how few parents do help to cure it, while curable! whereas an appetite curbed in childhood would endure a denial in age.

(3.) *Youth have violent humours, and ſelfiſhneſs*; and therefore don't fooliſhly gratify them. *A child left to himſelf, brings his mother to ſhame.* Oh what a deviliſh ſight! how pleaſing to Satan, to ſee children cockered, and youth indulged? It's peeviſh, then all muſt be done to pleaſe it; it's obſtinate, and it muſt have its will; it's revengeful, and it muſt not be checked: This is the way of moſt parents. And

Prov. xxix. 15.

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'tis juſt with God, that child ſhould break your hearts, whoſe will you never broke. How many poor creatures will have cauſe in hell to curſe their parents? Dreadful! that they prove the worſt enemies to their children, under a pretence of fondneſs.

(4.) *Youth have many luſts, and are prone to ſin*; therefore be afraid for them, and prevent all occaſions. *Job*, when his children had been feaſting, *offered burnt-offerings for them, leſt they ſhould have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts.* Oh that parents would conſider, what brittle veſſels children be! what dried tinder youth is! Occaſions tho' ſmall, over-rule young perſons. What then? Oh then be perſuaded to chuſe the company of your children for them; ſee that it be of their own ſex, and virtuous. Put them to trades, and ſuch trades as have the leaſt ſnares; place them in families, where moſt good is to be got, and leaſt evil to be catch'd. Find them buſineſs and fulneſs of employ, and cut out their time for them. Parents, learn this wiſdom, that your children have no time for idleneſs. Marry them as ſoon as convenient, if ſo be you are not very certain of their ſobriety. Job i. 5.

(5.) *The vanity of youth is deeply rooted*; therefore be importunate pleaders, and ſharp correctors. If advice prevail not, 'tis not an eaſy thing to cure a child of its vanity, or youth of its folly. *Fooliſhneſs* Prov. xxii. 15.

neſs is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him; and *withhold not correction from thy child, and he ſhall not die.* I look upon it as a ſad ſign of growing villany in the next age, that *correction* is become unfaſhionable. The Lord pity us!

Prov. xxiii. 13.

LET me tell you once for all, Sirs, youth is chiefly governed by *fear*; and they that loſe the benefit of that paſſion, loſe the greateſt advantage which youth have to be manag'd or improv'd by. People may talk of *love*, but God's enjoining *the rod* ſo oft, diſcovers that it will prevail but with very few. Wiſdom muſt be exerciſed in this matter, as the end may be beſt attained: But be aſſured, the blood of that child lies at the parent's door, who might have been reform'd by correction, and was not. Can parents forget God's ſevere judgment againſt *Eli*, for his indulgence to his ſons? Or do you think, that children are now ſo harmleſs, that they need not be corrected? I ſhould have call'd you to give them *good examples*, as being powerful means to incline them, who ſtrictly obſerve, and are prone to imitate you: They are apter to evil than good; deny them no help to their holy improvements, and create them no hindrances. But time prevents me.

Inf. 3. How ſhould young ones bear the rebukes and reſtraints of *ſuperiors*, under

der a ſenſe of their own vanity? Here I call to young ones again. Parents and maſters know what will harm you, better than you do your ſelves; they know how weak you are to reſiſt temptations; they know what's ſinful and deſtructive, better than you. Oh therefore thank God! and thank them that are over you, who endeavour your healing, and *do not ſuffer ſin to lie upon you.* If you be good your ſelves, you'll do the ſame for your children when you have them; therefore don't take that ill, which is your neceſſary cure: But reckon thus with your ſelves, "Am I "vain! Then, though I have not the li- "berty I would, and have not the allow- "ance I deſire, matters are better order'd "for me; for I can't bear thoſe other "things." Lev. xix. 17.

Inf. 4. How attentive ought you to be to all the advices and pleadings of your relations, as being deſign'd to heal you? Oh! for thy ſoul's ſake, young one, never let the advice of thy parents be loſt; never let thy friends counſel and reproof be loſt; becauſe 'tis all deſigned to remove this diſeaſe. Thou doſt not ſee the hell thou art juſt running into; thou doſt not ſee the heaven thou art flying from; thou doſt not ſee the God thou haſt provok'd; thou doſt not know the miſery thou art under; thou art ignorant what grace, what wiſdom thou wanteſt. How much muſt thou

thou learn and attain, before thou art wise, or good! Thou art ignorant of many snares, and sins; thy folly hides thy folly from thee. Oh therefore! be heartily intent to all their advices, and say to thy self, "Lord, is this for my cure, "and shall I neglect it? Is this reproof "for my good, and shall I make light of "it? Is all this pains to heal my poor "diseased soul, and shall I cast it behind "my back? God forbid!"

Inf. 5. How great a wonder of grace is a young convert? and how thankfully should such acknowledge it? Oh the power, that makes the vain prodigal *come to himself!* How near does God come to the soul, to tame it, when 'tis *like a wild ass's colt?* How efficacious is Grace, that overcomes lust in its greatest rage? and that deadens temptations when they strike on youth, so prone to relish the offer, and yield to it? Oh blessed work! that inclines us to fear that God, whom in our youth we are so apt to despise.

Luke xv. 17.

Job xi. 12.

HAVING laid these things before you, I shall now offer,

Secondly, Two general Uses of *Exhortation*, and apply particularly to you.

Exh. 1. REFLECT on your selves, whether you are under this vanity, or delivered from it. Young folks, I speak mostly to you, and therefore I intreat you for

for the Lord's ſake to lay to heart what I am ſaying. Your caſe is diſmal, you are born vain, and prone to be vain; are you ſtill ſo, or not? It is a great work that goes to the healing of you; is that work paſſed on thee? It is a great deal of God goes to the making a youth good, and ſerious; have I felt that? Pray aſk your ſelves, "Am I vain, or am I not? Is my heart "a ſpring of divine motions, or of beaſt-"ly inclinations?" Young people, how is it with you? *Try your ways.* Are they under the government of grace, or of luſt? Are they under the conduct of wiſdom or folly? Aſk your ſelves, "Do my "ways profit, or hurt people?" Is it not time to aſk?—What, Sirs! are the years you have ſpent unfit to be enquired after? or is thy ſin not worth being concerned about? Oh! aſk your ſelves often, "What am I doing? whither am I go-"ing? does my walk pleaſe God, or pro-"voke him? do I walk with him, or do "I forſake him?" Try and judge impartially. It's thy greateſt concern: Thou mayeſt deceive thy ſelf, but thou canſt not deceive thy God, who will judge as the matter truly ſtands with thee. How is it with you, Oh young ones! There is none here, but *ought to be* concern'd, how it is with them. You *will be* concern'd, nay, within a while you *muſt be* concern'd; Lam. iii. 40.

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therefore enquire into this to day, and never reſt 'till it be determined.

Exh. 2. RECEIVE Directions ſuitable to your caſe. And here I muſt divide this whole aſſembly into two parts: [1.] Such as are *under the power of vanity*; and, [2.] Such as are *by grace delivered from it*. One of theſe two is the caſe of every one in this aſſembly. Young and old, you are ſtill under the power of vanity, or you are delivered from it. There is a great difference in your caſe, I'll ſpeak to each.

[1.] As to *thoſe of you*, who are yet *under the power of this vanity*.

POOR ſouls! would you be delivered? Or have you a mind to continue what you are? Come, children, dare you be ſtill blind, and ſtill obſtinate? Shall thy ſoul that was made for God, be *a cage of unclean birds?* Rev. xviii. 2. Shall thy tongue which is *thy glory*, be employed to his diſhonour? Oh young body! ſhall not Chriſt heal thee of that nature, which the devil introduced? Wilt thou live a brute and a devil ſtill? Shall Satan ſerve himſelf of thy parts, and of thy ſtrength, and of thy opportunities? Shall the devil ſay of thee, "Here's a "child, I hope, will do me a great deal "of drudgery? here's a young perſon will "do my work while he lives, and be "damned when he dies?" Young folks, Satan ſtands by, and ſeems to ſpeak thus

of

of you. And must Christ all this while weep over thee, and say, "Here's a young "thing that's my creature, but he will "rebel against me as long as I spare him? "Here's a youth fit to serve me, but he "will bring on me all the dishonour that "he can, and obstruct my interests as far "as he is able. Here's a stripling that I "bought with my blood, but he serves "Satan before me, and will not be saved, "unless against his will?" For the Lord's sake lay these things to heart to day! What say you, child, to this? What say you, young people? I hope some of you will be ready to answer, "O Sir, help "me! give me some counsel; for I am "weary of this present condition, and "would be in a better!" If so, take these few advices, and resolve to follow them in earnest.

1. BELIEVE how bad thou art by nature, and bewail it before God. Oh, 'tis thy picture I have been drawing, as bad as it is! Come poor young folks, you that pride your selves when you look in the glass, could you but see your souls with a right eye, you would abhor your selves. Young people, will you believe God speaking of you? does not he say, you are vain and vile? Will you believe all the wise people that know you? and will they not all agree in this, that thou art a sinful wretched creature? Doth not thy own experience

convince thee? Oh friend! own it, and go away mourning. How canſt thou but do ſo, when thou conſidereſt, "My heart "is filthy, my affections diſorder'd, the "powers of my ſoul poor and wound- "ed, the image of God loſt, Satan's nature "is viſible upon me!" What a reproach doth every title faſten? What can be ſaid worſe of thee, than that thou art thus? Is this a Caſe to be reſted in? Is this a ſtate to be quiet in? Yet this is thy caſe, O young perſon! by nature thou art full of what's hateful to God, and hurtful to others; thou art intent on thy own ruin. Oh, Sirs! the moſt innocent young ſinner here, is fuller of poiſon than a toad, and filthier than a ſwine: All of you are thus by nature; and yet thou remaineſt ſo.

2. CONSIDER often, how miſerable thou art whilſt thou continueſt thus vain. Danger will affright ſome, whom ſin will not. But, O how unable am I to repreſent the horror of this to you! Young
Eph. ii. 3. people, you *are children of wrath, as well as others.* Every luſt is a killing wound; every ſtep is on the brink of hell. There's not a wicked child in this congregation, but I can ſtand over it, and ſay, "Here's a child, with whom God is angry
Nah. i. 1, 2. "every day; here's a young body, *for "whom God reſerves his wrath*, and ſees "his time a coming." Young people, ſure you

you will be afraid to go home, and say, "I am a sinner; and I am an impenitent "sinner, and therefore an unpardoned "sinner; a sinner for whom everlasting "wrath is reserved." Once for all, you resolve to be wicked; and God cannot but be just. You will not be *born again*; and God must then keep you *out of his kingdom*. You will *live after the flesh*; ay, and God is as resolved, *you shall die in your sins*. Come young people, God will be as peremptory as you, and his will shall stand. Therefore tremble to go out of this congregation, unless in a sounder mind than you came.

John iii. 3. Rom. viii. 13.

3. Be convinced, that nothing short of renewing Grace can savingly heal thee. Morality may polish thee; fear and shame may restrain and conceal a sinner; but 'tis only grace can truly alter a sinner. Oh my friends, it must be *a new heart*, or it will always be a vain heart. Vain inclinations will govern, 'till God *writes his law there*. The youngest must be *a new creature*, or natural corruption will baffle all pretensions.

Heb. viii. 10. Gal. vi. 15.

4. Be assur'd, Grace cannot be had but from God, through Christ, by the operations of his Spirit. Don't think it an easy thing to attain grace, though it be necessary to have it. Young folks, *God* must open his treasures anew, or you will for ever want it. *Christ* must plead for thee,

or thy diſeaſe is incurable; he muſt act towards thee as Redeemer, and not merely as Creator, unleſs he paſs by thee as one rejected. He *ſeeks the loſt ſheep*; he makes the ſtubborn willing: Faith is his gift; conſent is his purchaſe, as well as the bleſſings annexed to it. *There is no other name by which we can be ſaved*; there is no other fountain of grace or help. Know alſo, that *the Spirit* muſt give *of Chriſt's fulneſs*: He muſt enlighten thee, O child, or thou wilt go blind to thy grave; he muſt renew thee, or thou wilt die in thy uncleanneſs. Chriſt made the atonement, but the Spirit makes us capable of its application. Chriſt hath acquired a fulneſs of grace and bleſſings; it's by the Spirit he imparts thereof to man. Men cannot renew thee; Means of themſelves are too weak to alter thee. Oh, then look upwards! wait upon God; direct thine eye to Chriſt; depend on the holy Spirit, as able to conquer thy reluctancy, and ready to work by the means to which his preſence is promiſed.

Mat. xviii. 12.

Acts iv. 12.

John xvi. 14.

5. OBSERVE, that the more thou ſinneſt, and the longer thou art graceleſs, the more oppoſition thou layeſt in the way of grace. Think ſeriouſly of this; the hopes of the ſoul are upon the Spirit's working, and the diſpoſedneſs of the heart to yield to his motions. Oh, my friends! will you go on in ſin? then the Spirit of God

God will leave you, he *will not always* Gen. vi. 3.
ſtrive: The more you ſin, the more you *quench the Spirit.* Will you go on in ſin? then your heart will be *hardened* the more Heb iii.
through the deceitfulneſs of ſin. Wilt thou go 13.
on delaying? then to morrow it will be harder to prevail with thee than to day. Oh! therefore be alarmed *to day.* More ſin will ſtrengthen your luſts, and further prejudice your ſoul againſt Chriſt. Is not converſion difficult enough already? and is there need to make it next to impoſſible? For the Lord's ſake conſider! greater offences may make God and men ſay of thee, "This wretch is reſolved againſt "grace, he arms himſelf againſt hope."

6. RESOLVE within thy ſelf, that thou wilt follow after Chriſt, and throw off thy vanity without delay. Oh, that I could but get this conſent from you all this day! that all the young people in this congregation would ſay, O Lord, *Amen, Amen!* Come, poor ſinners, put it to your ſelves this moment: Say, "For this I "will pray, that I may ceaſe to be vain; "I will meditate for this; I will hear for "this." O young folks, that are yet in a ſtate of ſin, you have work enough for your time! Sometimes you know not how to paſs away your time. What, ſpiritually blind, and not know how to paſs away time? What, dead and graceleſs, and not know how to paſs away time? A ſinner

wild in his frame, and have no work? Oh! be intreated this day to be earneſt with God, and never be quiet 'till he has given thee wiſdom inſtead of folly; 'till he has given thee ſobriety inſtead of raſhneſs; humility inſtead of conceit; calmneſs inſtead of paſſion; truth inſtead of falſhood. Never be ſatisfied 'till God has brought thee to live to the beſt and higheſt purpoſes. And, Oh, that every ſoul would ſay *Amen!* How would Satan be diſappointed? how would heaven rejoice? It would be thy beſt day, and the entrance of eternal life.

Obj. But I believe ſome here are ready to ſay, "Sir, muſt I *now* change? muſt I "*now* ſtop my vanity? Surely 'tis *too* "*ſoon*; ſure I might be vain a little "longer; there's no danger in it, I hope."

Anſw. My addreſs to you is, for this inſtant; even *to day, harden not your hearts.* Oh child! juſt now ceaſe to be vain; 'tis late enough with the youngeſt of you. It's not too ſoon to ſtop a wicked courſe. Now, now thou ſhouldſt yield to Chriſt: If you aſk, Why *now?* I tell you,

Heb. iv. 7.

(1.) Because young people's ſouls ſhall be ſaved or damned by the ſame rules as the old ones, if they be paſt infancy. Oh, if you die to night, *God will judge you by the goſpel!* and that's the loweſt rule that God can judge you by. *Youth* muſt be *judged*, as well as men: *Young ones*, that

Rom. ii. 16.

Eccl. xi. 9.

that *obey not the goſpel*, ſhall not eſcape the *vengeance*. 2 Theſ. i. 8, 9.

(2.) God is concerned at, and provoked by the vanity of children. Pray conſider: You think, it may be, that God takes no more notice of what you ſay or do, than you do your ſelves. Alas! you are deceived: Don't you think, God was angry with the *little children*, whom he *ſlew by the Bears* for deriding the prophet? God notes what you do: Young ones, God doth not rule old men, and leave children to their own wills. His laws are preſcribed to young men, under the ſame threats, as to the old; and it's not indifferent to him what you do. God obſerves what *you* do, as much as any other perſon; for you are his ſubjects, who were made for his glory. You ſerve him, or his enemy the devil; and what *you* do, is good, or evil. 2 Kings ii. 23, 24.

(3.) The youngeſt of you are under vows to God againſt vanity. I ſuppoſe, you were *entered into God's covenant* by your parents: And was not a holy heart, and a ſerious godly life engaged in that covenant, in oppoſition to ſin and Satan? You are dedicated to God in your infancy; you are *his, and not your own*. Young children! what, will you lye to God now? will you be perjur'd now? Oh, God forbid! Dare any young perſon here ſay, "I "was given to God in my infancy, but "I now retract it? I was ſworn to be the "Lord's, Deut. xxix. 11, 12. 1 Cor. vi. 19.

" Lord's, but I will not keep to him?" Baptiſm will ſink thoſe children of believers, who perform not their vows, and practically renounce their God.

(4.) LET me tell you, if you remain vile all your youth, a thouſand to one but you will ever be ſo. You may die before you are old, and then you are undone: But if you live, and are not converted when young, it's improbable that ever you ſhould. Oh, it's ill dealing with old ſinners! they are conceited, full of prejudices, and immerſed in worldly cares; the calls and threatnings of God are grown familiar to them, and their ſouls ſtupid and void of affection. God makes now and then an inſtance of grace in them, but 'tis rare. The *laſt hour Converts* are next to miracles. Moſt find how true it is, that

Prov. xxix. 1. *he that hardens his heart, being often reproved, ſhall die without remedy.* Again,

(5.) OH, what ſervice mayſt thou do for God, when thou ceaſeſt to be vain betimes! Come, my friends, what a heap will every day's little come to in time? If young perſons would but now begin to be holy, tho' they act but a little for God every day, it will at length amount to much; as we ſay, he that begins with the ſun, will make a long day's journey. Oh, how much do young people do for the devil, in a ſtate of ſin, when they live long! how large is the roll of their tranſgreſſions?

greſſions? And how much might they do for God in a ſtate of grace? How many may bleſs God for thee? and what a publick bleſſing mayſt thou prove? Thou mayſt thus be an eminent Saint, much improved for heaven, and abundant in the fruits of righteouſneſs.

(6.) OUR youth will be the plague, or hope of this land, in this great *criſis*. Great things are before us; the rapid motion of providence hints no common matters. There have of late been many ways taken to debauch young people in their manners, to prejudice them againſt holineſs and ſobriety. Nevertheleſs the holy God has ſeaſoned ſome young ones; there are many looking heaven-ward; and God ſeems deſigned to reform the reſt. Well, whether of theſe two prevail, doth determine *England*'s lot. Oh, if our youth grow yet more profligate, God is about to leave us! If he recover our youth, we may hope he'll yet continue amongſt us. Young ones, I would be earneſt with you; for God indicates his mind to *England* by you. Oh! be you all ready to ſay, "Can "I help to ſave a nation? By the grace "of God I will be one of thoſe that will "do it; let Satan, and the world, and "the fleſh ſtruggle with me as they can."

(7.) THIS youthful vanity continued in, will be the grief and wounding of thy age, though thou ſhouldſt be converted then.

then. Little do you now know, what youthful sins may cost you in old age. Job xiii. 26. *Thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth*; says *Job*. Oh! how bitter will the remembrance of past villanies be? How wilt thou tremble, to think thou hast help'd any one in the way to hell, when thou thy self art got out of that road? How will it grieve thee, to think thou hast been a means to damn any soul? Can it be a little thing to thee? The joy of *late Converts* is abated by the thoughts of youthful sins. *Paul* carry'd it to the grave with him, that he was *a persecutor* in his youth. Believe me, Sirs, the evidence of our conversion, when late, is more than made up by the innocency of our lives, when converted young: And they are to blame, who seem to complain, that gross villanies have not made their change more remarkable.

THUS I have done with the *first* Sort I was to speak to: God grant, it may be to such purpose, that none may go out of this place unwearied and unresolved; unwearied with his vanity, and unresolved to put an end to it! And now,

[2.] As to *those of you*, who are *through grace delivered from this vanity*.

BEFORE I enter on this, I must declare, you are *our joy*, and *our crown*. I would I could speak it of every one here to day: Oh,

Oh, that every young one in this place were of this number! You are our comfort, that God has ſome to propagate religion when we are dead and gone. How lovely is God's image in your tender years! Your grace is leſs queſtionable now, than it would be if you were aged. I ſay, your converſion is more evident now; for you are now in your health and heat; you are now under the force of temptation; you are not decrepit, and aged, and under the government of fear, as old folks be. Oh, my friends! what but Grace could win your conſent to Chriſt now, when the devil and the world are ſtrongly bidding for it? You are like to reap the largeſt harveſt, becauſe you have the longeſt ſeed-time. You young ones that do fear the Lord betimes, you are like to be the more remarkable in heaven. All the bleſſings that belong to the oldeſt Saint, belong to you; and Chriſt as truly loves you. The youngeſt believer in this place may rejoice in all the fulneſs of Chriſt, as his ſtore-houſe and ſecurity; he may read over all the greateſt promiſes of the goſpel with comfort, as his own. We bleſs God for you: Bleſs God for your ſelves, that he hath adopted you for his ſo ſoon, and thereby prevented much ſin, and made you early bleſſings. For your ſake we hope, the Goſpel will not be removed from *England:* How happy are each of you? Your

Your parents can die comfortably, now that you are in Chriſt. Your friends look with joy upon you, as ſecure in your better part. Oh the comfortable aſpect that every ſuch ſoul affords!

I WILL give you a few words of advice; and let them be attended to, and carefully obſerved, as *Directions* to ſuch as are *converted in their youth.*

1. BE watchful over your ſelves, becauſe ſome vanity remains in the beſt while here. Satan would more gladly overcome you than others; and he knows there's matter for temptation to work on in thee. Youthful years are ſubject to *youthful luſts:* 2 Tim. ii. 22. Young *Timothy* himſelf was warned of them by wiſe *Paul.* Therefore don't venture on occaſions of vanity; don't venture into temptations to ſin: Nothing but perfect Grace perfectly heals the Sin of your conſtitution. Young ones, you don't think you are perfect! you are not thoroughly clean; therefore walk carefully, walk watchfully. Take care of voluptuouſneſs, for there is ſome unrulineſs in thy appetite ſtill: Take care of wanton dalliance, and 1 Tim. v. 2. walk *with all purity*, for there is ſtill ſome diſpoſition to uncleanneſs. Still take care of evil company; for youth may be enſnared, though they are good: Avoid all frothy ſociety, for youth is apt to be perſuaded to loſs of time and levity: Therefore walk with watchfulneſs in whatever you

you are doing. You are not in heaven, though in a ſtate of grace; you are not perfect, though upright; therefore keep a jealous eye, while your green years continue.

2. KEEP humble and modeſt as to your opinions; for Truth admits the diſquiſitions of age and a long ſtudy. Young people think every notion they have gotten is infallible; and every plauſible reaſon is with them unanſwerable. But let me tell you, you will change your judgments, it may be before you die: And too much confidence in youth, leads a man to Scepticiſm in age: *Be not wiſe* therefore *in your own conceits.* You are ſubject to error; in deep things your knowledge can be but ſuperficial; if you live long, you will bluſh at your preſent confidence: And therefore, don't preſently take up notions; determine not haſtily difficult points. Make no noiſe about ſingular opinions, and do not raſhly cenſure men that are wiſe and aged; whoſe deep thoughts are preferable, to a voluble tongue, or luxuriant fancy. Rom. xii. 16.

3. DESIGN and furniſh yourſelves for great ſervice for God in the world. I would earneſtly beſpeak a mercy for the next age: Reſolve an eminency in holineſs. I would have every young convert here reſolve to be one of the higheſt ſaints. Reſolve to do much for God's name and goſpel; and if you have hopeful abilities, reſolve to be great

great bleſſings to your country; ſide with the beſt cauſe, and the beſt men. You may live to have greater opportunities to ſerve God, than we have had; you *may* do ſo, and I hope you *will* do ſo. The Lord furniſh our youth with abilities tranſcendent to ours, as their work is like to be above ours! Oh my friends, I would have you therefore prepare your ſelves; get your heads well enlightened, get your hearts well enflamed with Love to God and men. Labour to be induſtrious in your calling, that you may have eſtates to do good withal; for idleneſs and waſte make perſons too poor to do great ſervice; whence they live as ſhrubs though planted young. Study good Catechiſms, as a guard againſt errors. Lay up rules of prudence for your converſation, but beware of craftineſs and little baſe deſigns. Obſerve your conſtitution, that ſicklineſs may not prevent your uſe. Get ſuch an elocution, as may give advantage to what you ſpeak, *&c.*

4. ADMIT the helps, and put your ſelves under all the inſtituted engagements of Chriſt's members.

ADMIT the helps.---Sirs, we have good books; ſee that you carefully peruſe them: Read the Scriptures; ay, and labour to
2 Tim. iii. 15. be well furniſh'd, and ſkill'd in them *from your youth.* Set your ſelves to hear Sermons; eſpecially put your ſelves under the labours and conduct of the beſt Miniſters.

Contrive

Contrive every one of you to ſit under that Miniſtry, that truly underſtands, and plainly and powerfully urges, the great things of the Goſpel, *viz.* the myſteries, promiſes, and laws of our Redeemer. I tell you why I ſay this; young ones are apt to like the Preacher, that has fancy rather than weight, ſtrong affections rather than judgment; that has vain jingles rather than ſolid truth; and that is earneſt for ſmall matters above eſſentials. Oh take it from me to day! all hearers ſavour of their Paſtor. Give me therefore a Paſtor, that's likeſt to ripen for a heavenly life, and not to amuſe me with little fineſpun notions, where light carries not its evidence. Prefer moderate Paſtors above others; men who are more intent on the great things of the goſpel, than leſſer matters; men who allow for different conceptions in others, knowing themſelves to be imperfect; men who inſiſt on no terms of, or bars to, communion, but what Chriſt hath made. If God do not deliver the growing age from a contentious, dividing, uncharitable temper, I ſhall ſay, the next fiery ſtruggles will hazard the life of religion, and ſacrifice Love (the very heart of religion,) to every trifle, and to diſputable notions, which hath ſorely wounded us. Value moderate men; wiſe men are always ſuch. Your furious dividing

Bigot is unacquainted with himself, and is incapable of taking up the body of divine truths, as they stand in their order and place. Hence *one* thing fills his mind, and that commonly the least; and all his zeal is laid out in that, while he confounds truth and error. Few men have heads clear enough to distinguish truth. Truth and error lie oft so near, that the man who has not the clearest judgment, and the conduct of the Spirit, will easily fail; much more such whose parts are low, and whose uncharitable temper excludes the assistances of the Spirit.

FURTHER, I call you young ones to attend at the *Lord's supper*. You are dedicated to God by baptism, in the right of your parents: That was not thy act, but theirs for thee; that was not in thy own right, but in thy parents right. The first solemnizing of thy own profession is at the Lord's table, or in order to it; therefore I call you to make conscience of that. Young people, I say, make conscience of it. I tremble to think, how we differ from the church in former ages; that people now should be so backward to attend the Lord's supper.

Obj. BUT some may object, "Pray "how old must we be, that come to the "table of the Lord?"

Ans.

Anſ. I ANSWER, he is old enough, that can give evidence of his conſent to be the Lord's, and when he can act the graces that belong to a Sacrament, and improve the matter contained therein: Whenever any can do this, age is no obſtacle. I would not ſcruple one of fourteen, no more than I would one of fifty, where there's a credible profeſſion of grace, and a competent knowledge of the great eſſentials of religion, and a converſation ſuited to it. Therefore, my friends, make conſcience of this great duty; for I am afraid, our young profeſſors remain giddy, for want of this and of paſtoral conduct. I fear, you want *ſtrength* for want of this; and *comfort* for want of this; and Satan has great advantage againſt our young profeſſors, becauſe they are not more eſtabliſhed and ſteady than they be. Therefore if thou haſt given up thy ſelf to be the Lord's; and if God has enlightened thy mind to underſtand the great things of the Covenant; thou haſt a claim, and thou oughteſt to make it. Sure thou art old enough to conſent to be Chriſt's, when thou art fit to give thy ſelf in marriage.

5. DISPOSE of your ſelves to the greateſt ſafety, and the moſt uſefulneſs. You that are *ſervants*, chuſe no family where God is not worſhipped; for a curſe and a

ſnare is there, beſides the want of thoſe daily helps which you ſtand in need of. You that are *changing your dwellings*, go to no place where the goſpel is not; live not in a country where Chriſt is a ſtranger as to his inſtitutions. You young ones that are about *marrying!* Be ſure that *Grace* be the firſt thing that you provide for. God knows, how much eaſier it is to ſtifle good beginnings, than to conquer riveted cuſtom; and it's much eaſier to be overcome by a bad wife, than a bad wife to be converted by a good huſband. Know this, my friends, he that does not wiſely contrive for his ſoul, as a man in danger, will rue it ſooner or later. God is not bound to help us, when we run out of his way.

1 Cor. vii. 39.

6. RECKON upon a world of troubles and ſnares, and be ſtill preparing for them. Oh young people, be every day arming your ſelves, for you may be every day attacked. Don't promiſe your ſelves too ſerene a ſtate on this ſide heaven: *In the world you ſhall have trouble.* Thy work is a warfare, and holds for life; temptations will aſſault, diſappointments and ſcandals will try; the beſt men may be a ſtumbling-block: Be fit for every thing, and reſolved to hold on thy way. It is hard work; but Chriſt hath undertaken to aſſiſt thee, and heaven is worth thy

John xvi. 33.

thy labour. Oh do not think and act, as if you were to have your reſting place here, where Satan hath ſo much power, and ſin ſo great an intereſt!

7. STILL grow in grace, and uſefulneſs, with age. Though thou art good for thy time, thou art not ſo good as thou mayſt be, nor oughteſt to be; much leſs ſo good as you ſhould reſolve to be. Oh let not age's dulneſs be reproached by the vigour of your *eſpouſals!* Take care, that time adds to thy light, to thy love, to thy ſtrength and fruit. Move heaven-ward, as days are prolonged. Jer. ii. 2.

8. FAMILIARIZE the Word as your inſtructor and monitor. *How ſhould a young man cleanſe his way*, but *by taking heed to the Word?* Let the Word be *the man of thy counſel*; take the Scripture for thy rule, and reſolve to live by it. Oh *ſervants!* look what God makes your duty in Scripture; will that allow you to be idle, inſolent, or waſteful? *Children*, ſee what God makes your duty to your parents, and to your other relations: May you be rebellious, unkind? *&c.* The Word is the true meaſure and light. Alas! the oldeſt of us are ſure to ſtumble without the Word; what then can young ones do? Therefore ſtudy the Scriptures more, *ſearch them*, and labour in every thing to manage your ſelves by them. Pſal. cxix. 9. Col. iii. 22. Eph. vi. 1.

Sirs, I would have no one here ignorant of a Rule proper to moſt of the exigencies of his life; and let that be ſtill before thy eyes. I will give you young people *one advice*, that may do you good all your days, and that's this: I would have you all conſider what temptations you are like to meet with, and what are the duties you are like to be called to; always have *an apt Scripture* lodged in thy mind, ſuitable to each of theſe; and reſolve to do nothing, purpoſe nothing, before thou haſt firſt conſulted that Scripture in thy mind: This would be a ſtated way of avoiding much ſin. Young people! you that are in Chriſt, labour to live to theſe rules.

I SHALL now conclude: I have been plainly telling all of you, *Childhood and youth are vanity.* You all come *vain* into the world, *&c.* Are you altered, or are you not? Do you ſtill grow more vain, or more ſerious? Should God come this day, and divide this aſſembly, and ſet *the vain* on the right hand, and *the ſerious* on the left; O child, O young man, on which ſide wouldſt thou be found? Oh put it to your ſelves; what anſwer canſt thou return? Wilt thou go away and reſolve to be as vain as ever, after all that has been ſaid? If that be thy reſolve, would to God thou hadſt not been here!

here! this Sermon will be a thorn in thy ſide for ever. But if from what has been ſaid, you go away reſolving through grace to be faithful in the practice of all theſe directions, given you for the cure of your vanity; then thou wilt have cauſe for ever to bleſs God for the 25th of *December*, 1690.

A

Youth's Catechiſm.

Queſt.
HAT art thou?

Anſw. I AM a creature endued with reaſon, who muſt be in heaven or in hell for ever. *Rom.* ii. 9, 10.

Q. *Who made thee?*

A. GOD made me; by whoſe power every creature was made. *Iſa.* xlv. 12.

Q. *What is the God that made thee?*

A. GOD is a Spirit perfectly good, great, wiſe, holy, preſent every where, and without beginning or ending.

Q. *How many Gods be there?*

A. THERE is but one true God, Father, Son, and Spirit. 1 *Cor.* viii. 6. 1 *John* v. 7.

Q. *What did God make thee for?*

A. GOD made me to bring him glory, and to be happy in him. *Rom.* xi. 36.

Q. *Where*

Q. *Where may you know how to bring glory to God, and to be happy in him?*

A. In my Bible, where he declares his nature, and his will. 2 *Tim.* iii. 16, 17.

Q. *What condition was mankind created in?*

A. God made all of us holy and happy in *Adam* our first father, and common head. *Eccl.* vii. 29. *Gen.* i. 27.

Q. *By what rule did God govern all men in* Adam?

A. God required sinless obedience, as a condition of life, and denounced death, if man should in any thing break his law. *Gen.* ii. 17. *Gal.* iii. 10.

Q. *Did mankind continue holy and happy, by a perfect obedience to this law of innocency?*

A. No: *Adam* sinned against God, and thereby he corrupted the human nature, and became subject to all the misery which the law threatned against sin. *Rom.* v. 12, 18, 19.

Q. *What condition wert thou born in?*

A. I was born in a very miserable and sinful condition. *Eph.* ii. 3. *Psal.* li. 5.

Q. *How camest thou to be born in this condition?*

A. I must be miserable, if sinful; and I could not but be born sinful, because my nature was depraved in *Adam*, from whom it descends so to me by the line of my forefathers. *Job* xiv. 4. and xxv. 4.

Q. *Why*

Q. *Why must thou be sinful, because thy nature was at first depraved?*

A. GOD enacted this as the law of generation, that *Adam* should beget his children in natural likeness. *Gen.* v. 3.

Q. *What if thou shouldst die in that condition wherein thou wert born by nature?*

A. I SHOULD be undone, and be with the devils in hell for ever. *John* iii. 5, 36. *Rom.* v. 17, 18.

Q. *Doth the law of innocency provide no way for thy deliverance out of that misery?*

A. THE law of innocency provides no way for my deliverance out of this misery, as great and dreadful as it is. *Rom.* iii. 19, 20. *Gal.* iii. 21, 22.

Q. *Why dost thou think so?*

A. BECAUSE the law of innocency admits no pardon, but condemns for one sin; and I daily find that I have many sins. *Rom.* iii. 23. *Jam.* iii. 2.

Q. *Is there no way then to avoid that sin and misery thou wert born in?*

A. YES; there is, by the rich mercy of God, a way to save lost sinners. *Rom.* viii. 3. 1 *Tim.* i. 15.

Q. *What is the way which God hath contrived to save lost sinners?*

A. THE way of pardon and reconciliation revealed in the gospel. *Rom.* iv. 7. 2 *Tim.* i. 10.

Q. *How did God appoint a way of pardon and reconciliation?*

A. THE

A. THE Father appointed his Son to be the Saviour of sinners, and Christ accepted of that work under certain terms agreed on between them both. *Zech.* vi. 13. *John* xvii. 3, 20, 21, 25.

Q. *What was appointed to, and undertaken by Christ, as Saviour or mediator?*

A. CHRIST was to assume our nature, and therein to fulfil all righteousness, and die a sacrifice for our sins, and to save all the elect committed to him. *Isa.* liii. 5. *John* x. 15, 16.

Q. *What was promised to Christ, as the reward of his undertaking?*

A. THERE was promised to Christ, besides the glory of his person, as God-Man, that his obedience and sufferings should be accepted as an effectual price for the reconciliation of all such sinners to whom it was applied. *Isa.* liii. 10, 11, 12.

Q. *Was there nothing else promised to Christ, with respect to the elect?*

A. ALL the absolute promises of grace in order to the application of his blood, were made to Christ. *Gal.* iii. 16. 2 *Cor.* i. 20.

Q. *Did our Lord Jesus fulfil all righteousness, and make his soul an offering for sin?*

A. HE did; and thereby honoured the law, and vindicated the government of our Creator, notwithstanding his gracious dealings

dealings with sinners. *Mat.* iii. 15. *John* xix. 30. *Isa.* xlii. 21. *Heb.* ix. 14, 28.

Q. *When Christ had thus made atonement, was he sufficient to be a Saviour?*

A. YES: For, (1.) He hath the Spirit and a fulness of grace, with a right to give thereof to men. (2.) All judgment is committed to him whereby he is the law-giver to a sinful world. And, (3.) By the fulness of his merits he hath pardon, peace, and eternal life to dispose of, notwithstanding we had forfeited all into the hands of our Creator. *John* xvi. 14. *John* i. 16. *John* v. 22. *Heb.* v. 9. *Heb.* vii. 25.

Q. *What more is necessary to restore the happiness of lost man?*

A. THE application of the effects of Christ's fulness to their persons, that they may be regenerated, pardoned, and saved. *Rom.* v. 11. *Acts* ii. 38.

Q. *What way doth Christ take to apply his merits for the salvation of sinners?*

A. HE enacteth and publisheth a law of grace, wherein he promiseth pardon and life to such sinners as will accept of him as a Saviour on the terms of the gospel. *Heb.* xi. 6. *John* iii. 16, 17, 18. *Rom.* iii. 26.

Q. *What are the terms of the gospel?*

A. TRUE repentance, faith in Christ, and sincere obedience. *Acts* iii. 19. *Acts* xvi. 31, *Acts* xx. 21. *Heb.* v. 9.

Q. *What*

Q. *What is repentance?*

A. A SORROW for, and the separation of the heart from sin, as the greatest evil. *Jer.* xxxi. 18.

Q. *What is faith in general?*

A. SUCH a sight of things revealed in the Word, as powerfully affects the heart suitably to the nature of them. *Heb.* xi. 1.

Q. *What is faith in Christ?*

A. SUCH a sight of, and regard to Christ, as causeth the humbled soul to accept of, and come to him as our Prophet, Priest, and King. *John* i. 12. *Mat.* xi. 28.

Q. *What is it to come to Christ as a Prophet?*

A. To yield up our selves to his teachings, believing him infallible. *John* vi. 45, 68, 69.

Q. *What is it to come to Christ as our Priest?*

A. UNDER a conviction of our guilt and the fulness of his merits, to rely on him, as the only atonement for sin, and purchaser of all good for sinners. *Gal.* ii. 16. *Rom.* iii. 25.

Q. *What is it to come to Christ as King?*

A. To acknowledge his sole authority, and submit to all his laws, unfeignedly resolving to obey him in every one of his appointments. *Acts* ix. 6. *Luke* xix. 14, 27. *Isa.* l. 10.

Q. *What else doth the gospel contain?*

A. IT

A. It contains a prophetick account of what God decreed, and a tranſcript of what was promiſed to Chriſt, with reſpect to the Elect; to ſay nothing of doctrinal myſteries, rules of a chriſtian's walk, conditional promiſes, the danger of ſinners that reject Chriſt, *&c.*

Q. *When did this goſpel-rule of life begin?*

A. In the firſt promiſe to *Adam* after his fall, though the fulleſt diſcoveries of it were reſerved till Chriſt came in the fleſh. *Gen.* iii. 15. *Gal.* iii. 8. 2 *Tim.* i. 10. *Heb.* ii. 3.

Q. *Did God ever ſince the fall propoſe any way of Salvation, beſides this law of grace?*

A. No: And every ſaved ſinner was ſaved by this rule, according to the meaſure of its diſcovery that obtained in every age. 1 *Cor.* x. 4.

Q. *How far are all ſinners that live under this goſpel concerned in it?*

A. Life through Chriſt is freely offered ſincerely to every ſinner that will repent and believe; and if they do thus, the want of perfection ſhall not condemn them. *Acts* iii. 19. *Acts* x. 43. *Acts* xvi. 30, 31. *Rom.* iii. 22.

Q. *What if thou doſt not accept of Chriſt?*

A. I shall be more miſerable than if Chriſt had never died. 1 *Pet.* ii. 7, 8. *Mat.* xi. 24.

Q. *Is*

Q. *Is the mere enacting and publishing the gospel all that Christ hath done towards the application of his merits to elect sinners?*

A. BESIDES that, he hath appointed his Spirit to incline their hearts, and effectually enable them to obey those terms which the gospel requireth. 1 *Thes.* i. 4, 5, 6. 1 *Cor.* ii. 10. *Gal.* iii. 14.

Q. *And doth the Spirit thus concur to apply redemption, and enable them to obey the gospel?*

A. YES; and doth not only strive with them, as he doth with others. 2 *Cor.* iii. 3. 1 *Pet.* i. 2. 2 *Thes.* ii. 13.

Q. *By what means doth the Spirit work upon Souls?*

A. PRINCIPALLY and most usually he works by the gospel itself, putting forth his power thereby, as a seed of life. *Gal.* iii. 2. *Jam.* i. 18. *Rom.* x. 14.

Q. *By what part of the gospel doth the Spirit usually work?*

A. HE is confined to no part; he works by the precepts, by the account of Christ's death, by the promises, threats, or the great rewards; yet which ever of these he works by, it is pursuant to, and in accomplishment of, the absolute promises of grace which were made to Christ. *Acts* xvi. 30, 31. *Gal.* iii. 29. *Gal.* iv. 28.

Q. *How dost thou expect to be made willing and able to accept of Christ?*

A. NOT

A. NOT by any natural power of my own, who am dead in sin; but by the grace of Christ expressing itself in the operations of the Spirit. *Eph.* ii. 1, 5. *Acts* v. 31. *Tit.* iii. 5.

Q. *How doth the Spirit cause the sinner to accept of Christ?*

A. BY enlightening the mind, and changing the heart in regeneration; whence there is an inclination, will, and ability to accept of Christ. *Acts* xxvi. 18. *Tit.* iii. 5.

Q. *Doth the Spirit nothing in order to the making the Soul earnest and willing to this?*

A. HE awakens the soul to a concern for salvation, and a deep sense of its present misery without Christ. *Acts* ii. 37. *Luke* xv. 17.

Q. *What oughtest thou to do on thy part, in order to get this grace?*

A. I MUST not be idle, but I must (1.) Diligently hear the word. (2.) Pray fervently to Christ for the Spirit's operations. (3.) Consider and bewail my condition. (4.) Put a stop to all ways of sin to my utmost. (5.) Carefully entertain, and improve every motion of the Spirit. And, (6.) Strive with my heart, and urge it with all gospel arguments to obey the call of Christ. *Prov.* ii. 3, 4, 5. *Mat.* xiii. 19.

Q. *What may a sinner expect when he accepteth of Christ?*

A. HE

A. He may expect, (1.) To be united to Chriſt in the neareſt relation. (2.) To be admitted into a ſtate of pardon and peace. (3.) To be adopted, and made ſtill more conformable to Chriſt in grace and holineſs. (4.) To be ſupported with ſtrength for ſervice, and perſeverance. And, (5.) To be partaker, when he dies, of the glory of Chriſt in the higheſt heavens. *Eph.* v. 30. *Gal.* ii. 16. *John* i. 12. *Col.* i. 11. 1 *John* iii. 2.

Q. *What is the condition of every ſinner till he do accept of Chriſt?*

A. He abides under the wrath of God, and hath no perſonal title to pardon, peace, or glory. *John* iii. 36.

Q. *Is this the condition of the Elect while they abide in unbelief?*

A. Yes: For though God hath decreed, and Chriſt hath purchaſed, faith and life for them; yet God hath determined by the law of faith, that all are under condemnation until they do believe. *Mark* xvi. 16. *Luke* xiii. 3. hence *Rom.* v. 1. viii. 30. iv. 24.

Q. *Is not a believer pardoned, before he can put forth any other acts of obedience?*

A. Though true faith is a certain principle of obedience, yet as ſoon as we believe, we are pardoned; even before there can be any time to put forth any other acts of obedience. *Gal.* v. 6.

Q. *Do repentance or faith any way make satisfaction to justice?*

A. No: That is only Christ's work; but God hath appointed, that that soul shall repent and believe, on whom pardon for Christ's sake shall be bestowed; and he hath solemnly declared he'll forgive no man till then. *Mark* xvi. 16. *Rom.* xi. 20, 23. *Heb.* iv. 6. *John* viii. 24. *Rom.* x. 13, 16. 1 *Pet.* ii. 7, 8. hence *Gal.* ii. 16.

Q. *What assurance hast thou, that God will forgive and save thee if thou believe?*

A. I HAVE God's testimony, and promise; and the seals of the covenant, *viz.* baptism and the Lord's supper. 1 *John* v. 9, 10. *Acts* xxii. 16. *Luke* xxii. 20. *Rom.* iv. 11.

Q. *Art thou engaged to accept of, and submit to Christ according to the gospel?*

A. YES, I am strongly engaged to submit to Christ, because he bought me with his blood, my parents dedicated me to him in baptism, and love to my own soul requires it. *Rom.* xiv. 9. *Mat.* xxviii. 19. *Ezek.* xxxiii. 11.

Q. *On what account wert thou baptised?*

A. MY believing parents were allowed, and engaged to dedicate me to God as their child; and God graciously admitting the infant seed of believers into covenant, as part of themselves, did seal to me those blessings which my infant state needed, and

and was capable of. *Deut.* xxix. 11, 12. *Gen.* xvii. 7. *Acts* ii. 39. 1 *Cor.* vii. 14.

Q. *What doth the covenant bind thee to?*

A. To be the Lord's, in a ſincere care to know, love, believe, obey, worſhip and ſerve him all my days, and to depend on God through Chriſt for all happineſs. *Ezek.* xvi. 8. *Rom.* xii. 1. *Rom.* vi. 4.

Q. *What didſt thou engage againſt?*

A. I ENGAGED againſt being governed by Satan, or the fleſh, as my rulers; and againſt taking up with the world's goods as my portion, and againſt the cuſtoms of the men of this world as my guide. *Rom.* vi. 14, 15.

Q. *When ought a child to know, conſider, and agree to this covenant?*

A. As ſoon as he is capable to uſe his reaſon, and judge of good or evil, which many are fit to do about ſeven years old. 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. *Pſal.* xxxiv. 11.

Q. *What if a child through the love of ſin, or vanity of mind, will not agree to this covenant when he is capable?*

A. HE then rejecteth Chriſt our Saviour, and renounceth the bleſſings of the goſpel. 2 *Pet.* ii. 1.

Q. *Is it a great ſin to refuſe to agree to this covenant, to which thy baptiſm engaged thee?*

A. IT's the damning ſin, and the heart of all ſin; for, (1.) It's rebellion continued againſt my maker. (2.) It's ingrati-

tude and perjury to my redeemer. (3.) It's groſs injuſtice to my parents. (4.) It's an affront to all the Godly. And, (5.) It's a ſelf-killing cruelty to my own ſoul. *Pſal.* ii. 3, &c.

Q. *When wilt thou perſonally conſent to this covenant, as the only way of life to ſinners?*

A. I WILL truly with my whole ſoul conſent now, and live expreſſing my conſent: And as ſoon as I underſtand how to improve the Lord's ſupper, I will by Chriſt's help ſolemnly renew it there.

Q. *Ought you upon every fault to queſtion your intereſt in this covenant?*

A. THOUGH I ought to bewail every ſin, and ſeek pardon by faith in Chriſt's blood; yet I ſhould not doubt my covenant intereſt, unleſs my fault be ſuch as gives juſt cauſe to queſtion whether my conſent was ever ſincere. *Pſal.* xxxii. 5. *Mat.* vi. 12. *Pſal.* xviii. 21, 22, 23.

Q. *What is the beſt joy and pleaſure in this life?*

A. THE deep ſenſe of God's love, and the lively hopes of glory. 1 *Pet.* i. 8.

Q. *What ſhouldſt thou be moſt afraid of in this World?*

A. OF ſin; becauſe that provokes my God, and is the cauſe of all miſery. *Rom.* vi. 23. *Heb.* xii. 15.

Q. *What muſt thou do to keep from ſin?*

A. (1.) I MUST believe every thing to be

be a sin, which is against the word of God. (2.) I must humbly look to Christ for strength. (3.) I must avoid all occasions which lead to sin. And, (4.) I must, when I am tempted, consider what a dangerous and evil thing sin is, and resolve against it. 1 *John* iii. 4. 2 *Cor.* xii. 8, 9. *Gen.* xxxix. 9, 10.

Q. *What is the sin that most hinders the good of souls, except unbelief?*

A. A CARNAL selfishness, which I ought to deny and mortify. *Mat.* xvi. 24.

Q. *When is one carnally selfish?*

A. (1.) WHEN one is governed by his fleshly appetite, humour, or self-will. (2.) When he inordinately pursues the things of the present life. And, (3.) When he loves carnal self above God. *Deut.* xxix. 19. 2 *Pet.* ii. 10. 2 *Tim.* iii. 2, 4. *Jam.* iv. 4.

Q. *What be the sins which professing Christians are most subject to?*

A. HYPOCRISY, formality, censoriousness, and divisions. 2 *Tim.* iii. 5. *Rev.* iii. 1. *Mat.* xv. 8. *Rom.* xiv. 3, 10. 1 *Cor.* xi. 18.

Q. *Who are hypocrites?*

A. THEY whose hearts are not truly changed by grace, and who allow themselves in any known sin, or are seemingly religious from some carnal end. *Rev.* iii. 1. *Mat.* xxiii. 25, 27. *Mat.* vi. 5.

Q. *What is formality?*

A. To be satisfied with the bare outward doing of the duties of religion, while the heart is not answerably affected, or employed. *Hos.* vii. 14. *Mal.* i. 8, 13.

Q. *Wherein lies the life and power of religion?*

A. (1.) In mortifying sin. (2.) In exercising grace for more communion with God. (3.) In love to God, which is holiness. And (4.) In love to men, which will keep from hurting them, and incline us to seek their good. *Col.* iii. 5. 1 *Tim.* iv. 7. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 3, 6.

Q. *Who are the happiest persons in the world?*

A. They that have most grace, and do most good.

Q. *Who are the hopefullest children?*

A. They that are most afraid of sinning, and are most industrious to know and love God, and become like to Christ.

Q. *What graces most adorn children?*

A. Humility, meekness, and teachableness.

Q. *What must thou do when thou wantest any good?*

A. I must in the name of Christ pray earnestly to God, who is ready to give whatever good thing I need. *Phil.* iv. 6. *John* xiv. 13. *Mat.* vii. 11.

Q. *From*

Q. *From what dost thou receive all good things?*

A. FROM God my Father, who graciously bestows whatever I have for soul or body. *Jam.* i. 17.

Q. *What dost thou owe to God for his daily mercies?*

A. (1.) I MUST love him more. (2.) I must heartily praise him for his goodness. (3.) I must be more careful to please God. And, (4.) I must use his gifts to his glory, that so I may be able to give a good account of my talents. *Luke* xvi. 3, 10.

Q. *By what signs mayest thou try the state of thy soul, whether thou art a true Christian or no?*

A. I MUST faithfully and oft examine my heart and ways by these things:

(1.) Do I love God above all things, and delight in the thoughts of him? *Mat.* x. 37. 1 *Cor.* viii. 3. *Psal.* civ. 34.

(2.) Do I unfeignedly accept of, and submit to the Lord Jesus, as my full and only redeemer? *John* i. 12. *Psal.* ciii. 3.

(3.) Is there no sin which I live under the dominion of? *Rom.* vi. 16. *Jam.* ii. 10. 2 *Sam.* xxii. 24.

(4.) HAVE I a sincere regard to every command of Christ? *Luke* i. 6. *Psal.* xviii. 22.

(5.) ARE my affections more set on heaven than on this world? *Luke* xii. 34

(6.) ARE the thoughts of heaven sweet to me, as it is a state of perfect holiness, and communion with God and Christ? *Eph.* v. 27. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 10. 1 *Thes.* iv. 17, 18.

(7.) AM I thankful for the worst affliction, if I find I am better, and liker to Christ by it? *Psal.* cxix. 71. *Heb.* xii. 11.

(8.) Do I find a soul-renewing power in the truths and duties of religion? *Psal.* cxix. 50. 1 *Pet.* ii. 2. 2 *Cor.* iii. 18.

(9.) Is the scope of my life and aims, to please and honour God, and be meet for glory? *Acts* xxiv. 16. *Luke* xii. 43.

(10.) Do I love the image of Christ wherever I see it? and do good men please me best, when they most express the life of Christ in their speech and carriage? 1 *John* iii. 14. *Psal.* lxix. 32. 3 *John* ver. 1, 2, 4.

(11.) AM I more thankful for an interest in Christ, than any temporal good? and am I most concerned to keep this interest unquestionable? *Col.* i. 12. 1 *Cor.* ix. 27. *Heb.* iv. 1. *Psal.* cxxxix. 23.

(12.) Do I find every holy attainment makes me still hunger and press after more, longing to be perfect? *Phil.* iii. 12, 13, 14. *Mat.* v. 6.

(13.) Do I carefully approve my self to God in what I am, and in what I do, despising the opinion of men in comparison

riſon therewith? 1 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4. 2 *Cor.* x. 17, 18.

Q. *When thy conſcience is helped by the Spirit to ſee theſe ſigns in thee, what mayeſt thou then do?*

A. (1.) I MAY ſafely rejoice in all the perfections of God, and in the fulneſs of Chriſt, as what doth ſecure my happineſs. 2 *Tim.* i. 12. 1 *Cor.* i. 30, 31.

(2.) I MAY comfortably apply to my ſelf all the promiſes made in the goſpel to believers. 2 *Cor.* vii. 1. 2 *Pet.* i. 4.

(3.) I MAY admit a holy joy, and expect death without fear. *Rom.* v. 2, 5. 1 *Cor.* xv. 55, 57.

THE END.

A

LETTER

TO THE

AUTHOR

OF A

DISCOURSE

OF

FREE-THINKING:

WHEREIN

The CHRISTIAN RELIGION is vindicated, by detecting ſeveral Abuſes of Free-thinking.

Printed in the Year 1713.

TO THE

AUTHOR, &c.

SIR,

AS remiſs as the Zeal for true Chriſtianity is at preſent, the faint Remains of it muſt excite ſome of different Denominations, to contend for our common Faith. With this View I publiſh theſe Sheets, which (except the firſt Paragraph) were finiſhed for my own uſe, before I ſaw any of the Anſwers to your Diſcourſe, and not a word alter'd upon reading thoſe admirable Tracts. I laid them aſide to this Time, to ſee if I might be excuſed by what ſome Diſſenters *were preparing of the like Nature. But conſidering the preſent State of Things, I think it better, to publiſh what I haſtily*

wrote

wrote in an infirm State of Health, than that all of us ſhould be ſilent for ſo long time, as thoſe more elaborate Anſwers may require.

Intending this Antidote for ſuch as may regard what's written by a Diſſenting Miniſter, *I repent not, that I confined my ſelf to plain ſerious Reaſoning. Nor ſhall I examine the Quotations, becauſe thoſe from* Heathen *Authors would be of no uſe to moſt of them, to whom I can hope to be ſerviceable: And as for the* Engliſh *Writers, I think* Conformiſts *will vindicate them, for the honour of the* Church of England, *of which all of them were Members.*

Sir, my Deſign by theſe Sheets, which I direct to you, is to prove ſundry Truths, and to detect the weakneſs of the (too oft jocular) Inſinuations, whereby you attempt to expoſe them. Nor can I think it impertinent, to produce Scriptures, *when I vindicate* Chriſtian Friendſhip, *and prove the* Eternity of Hell-Torments. *The Subject of our Debate I judge too awful, to admit my writing in a way ſavouring of Levity; and your ſelf in Circumſtances, which require me as a Chriſtian, neither to harden you by provoking Inſults, or wrathful Treatment; nor yet to forbear a ſober Appeal to your own Conſcience. Any Veneration for the moſt high God, will keep us from jeſting with his Name; or ſporting with the Scriptures, were it for no other Reaſons, than that they contain ſo much of his undoubted Will,*

in

in the Morality of them; and that their aptitude to ſerve Divine Purpoſes, is ſo demonſtrated by their holy effects, as to argue at leaſt a Probability, *that the Author of them is no other, than the ever bleſſed and jealous God.*

The very Poſſibility *of a Future State of Retribution, ought to terrifie us from bantering Hell-Torments, and rendering our ſelves or others obnoxious, by any Opinions, or Speeches, which expreſs a contempt of what may prove to be, the Divine Government, Grace, and Image.*

If you have any certain Evidence, that the Scriptures are a Forgery, why did not you produce ſolid Arguments inſtead of Ridicule? *which can convince no Man, but muſt be felt as a Degree of Perſecution, by all who love the Lord Jeſus and his Goſpel: And many of theſe are impartial in their Enquiries; nor is their rational Faculty leſs inſtructed by natural Light, by being illuminated by Divine Revelation, and therefore they are as capable of diſcerning the evidence of Truth, as any who appropriate to themſelves the Title of* Free-thinkers.

You'll find, I grant (what no true Proteſtant *denies) that every man has a right to* Free-thinking *about Religion: But I propoſe ſome neceſſary Qualifications; for though we are free to think of any Subject, we are not free to think of every Subject in*

in what Manner, and to what purpoſes we pleaſe ; and much leſs to confine Free-thinking, *only to profane Challenges and impious Cenſures of all true Religion ; right Reaſon condemns all ſuch Abuſes.*

It's our Intereſt to conſider, that if men are Subjects of Moral Government, *there will be a* Rule *as well as a Time of Judgment. By this inflexible Rule we ſhall be juſtified, or condemned. Truth will then be Truth, and Error be Error, independent on our Apprehenſions. If the Goſpel be found the Rule of Judgment, you have Cauſe for trembling, unleſs God give you* Repentance to the acknowledgment of the Truth *in this World. But if your Scheme contain that Rule of Judgment, you aſſure me, that I ſhall be in no danger by my Opinion ; for I not only* think freely, *which with you is ſufficient ; but unbiaſſed by any worldly Reſpects, I join with my Endeavours, many fervent Prayers to God, in the Name of Chriſt, that I may be directed to know (and obey) the whole Mind and Will of God, ſignified either by the Light of Nature, or his Revealed Word. Nor can this Addition to what you preſcribe, be dangerous, ſeeing you declare, (pag.* 33.) If I do my beſt, I ſhall be as acceptable to God, if I ſhould prove miſtaken in my Opinions, as if I receive none but right Opinions. *May not I hence infer, your Contempt of the Goſpel, as any Means of your Convictions,*

tions, to be so far more dangerous, as to oblige me to pray God soon to enlighten your Mind? for as yet I hope it's my Duty, though you should pity my mistaken Concern for you.

If Fame reporteth the true Author, your Character also excites me to wish, that your bright Parts were employed in Defence of the Truth; that your sober Life were sustained by a Principle of true Faith; and that the Publick may not more ways than one, suffer by this Performance of yours, who are reputed a zealous Lover of your Country. I am,

Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

DANIEL WILLIAMS.

TO THE

AUTHOR

OF THE

Diſcourſe of FREE-THINKING.

HAD your Diſcourſe been only a Preſervative from *Popiſh* reſtraints on our thoughts, it had been ſeaſonable. But as the plauſible *Rights of the Church* undermined all Chriſtian Ordinances; ſo you ſeem, by *Free-thinking*, to arraign and condemn the Goſpel and the Chriſtian Religion. You can't then blame any, who have founded on theſe all hopes of eternal Life and of preſent Supports, that the following Queries are propoſed.

FREE-THINKING is thus defined by you, *pag.* 5. By *Free-thinking* I mean, *the Uſe of the Underſtanding, in endeavouring to find out the meaning of any Propoſition whatſoever,*

whatſoever, in conſidering the Nature of the Evidence for or againſt it, and in judging of it according to the ſeeming force or weakneſs of the Evidence.

Qu. 1. OUGHT not ſome Qualifications be added, to diſtinguiſh ſober, uſeful *Free-thinking*, from that which is ſceptical and dangerous? Of which hereafter.

Qu. 2. Do you mean only the *intrinſick Evidence* of every ſort of Propoſition? For if you intend this, you exclude *Revelation* as a Divine Teſtimony from being any determining Evidence of the truth of any Doctrinal Propoſition; unleſs you can account for it as true by Human Reaſon. For inſtance, if God hath revealed that *the Dead ſhall riſe again*, is not this Teſtimony a ſufficient Evidence of this Truth, though it be an *extrinſick Evidence*; and natural Reaſon can find no Evidence in the Nature of it, upon which to conclude it, without ſuch Revelation?

Qu. 3. IF all men have not an *equal Degree* of Underſtanding, nor Advantages to attain the ſame Degree of Evidence of a Doctrinal Propoſition; will not their Judgment of it proportionably differ, about the meaning, and about the truth of it? being they cannot judge *alike* of the force of the true Evidence, or of the weakneſs of the contrary: Nor have they equal Evidences, becauſe of leſſer helps.

Qu. 4. CAN any man who rejects Divine

vine Revelation as *false*, judge aright of all the reveal'd Articles of Faith? seeing, he thinks the Evidence given by Revelation to have *no force*, and the weakest Objection against such Articles to be conclusive.

Qu. 5. MAY not they who judge of a Proposition by the *seeming* force or weakness of the Evidence, be uncertain, and mistake about some Propositions? For that Evidence may *seem of force*, which is really weak; and *seem weak*, when it is of more force than what is offer'd against it.

Qu. 6. Is it a certain consequence of any self-evident Truth, that man's Understanding *since the Fall* needs *no more help*, to search the meaning, and judge of the Evidence of what Truth and Duties concern our Recovery; than it needed *before the Fall*, to search the meaning, and judge of the Truths and Duties proper to a State of Innocency? Is not the Mind more blind? Is not the Will by its corrupt Inclinations apt to pervert and prejudice the Mind, and indispose it to that Industry and Impartiality which are necessary to search and judge of all supernatural Truths? nay, even of those that concern the Practice of such Virtues, as the very Light of Nature directs? How much more then of such, as transcend that Light?

You tell us, *pag.* 5. You will *prove this right to think freely.*

Qu. 1. If men have *a right* to such *Free-thinking* about *religious matters*, as becomes fallible men, seriously concerned to know Truth in order to Salvation; does it follow, that they have *a right* to such *licentious* Liberty of thinking, as argues a contempt of Religion, and carelessness about Salvation?

Qu. 2. Ought not men, when they would use their Understandings to search, in order to judge rightly of Divine Subjects, to see that their *Aims* are pious, and not to become secure in evil Practices; to see, that they be humble, and not proudly conceited; to see, that they reverence Things sacred, and indulge not profane Levity, or a fondness of Novelties, from a disgust of Truths, because long accustomed to their thoughts, or vulgarly received; and to see, that the Mind is open and attentive to receive Light, by all such ways as God communicates it? and not to reject Revelation, if he chuse that?

Qu. 3. Is it rational to think, the Creatures dependance on God is so inconsiderable, as that it's needless with our endeavours to find out Truth, to join *fervent Prayer to God*, that he would open our Understandings, to know the true meaning of Doctrines, and to make a

right

right Judgment of what we are examining?

Qu. 4. ARE not blasphemous, ungodly, unbelieving Thoughts *sinful*, if indulged, though under pretence of *Free-thinking*, or as the effect of that?

Qu. 5. OUGHT not such as enjoy the benefit of *Gospel-Revelations* greatly to fear, that if they should *not like to retain God in their Knowledge*, by the Evidence of *Gospel-Light*, and a Love thereto; lest God *give them up to a reprobate Mind*, and the Lusts of their own Hearts? For so he did *the Heathen*, who *liked not to retain God in their Knowledge*, received by the Light of Nature; and those, who fell under *strong Delusions to believe a Lye*, because *they received not the Love* of Gospel-Truths. Rom. i. 28. 2 Thes. ii. 10, 11.

Qu. 6. IF you confound these very *different Kinds* of *Free-thinking*, and mean to prove, that the *ill* manner of *Free-thinking* is proved, by what only proves a *warrantable* way of *Free-thinking*; will not all rational Judges condemn your Reasons, as proceeding upon a *false State* of the *Question*; and be convinced that they conclude no more, than that men have *a right*, and obligation, only to *that Free-thinking*, which takes in the before described limitations?

THESE limitations to *Free-thinking* in matters of Religion, are as self-evidently

true, as that men have *a right* to *Free-thinking* at all: And to pretend *a right* to *free-thoughts* without ſuch limitations, is to claim *a right* profanely and proudly to ſearch for matters to undermine and banter all true Religion; under the cover of pleading for that Judgment of *private Diſcretion*, which is allow'd by all *true Proteſtants*. Granting therefore the force of moſt of your Reaſons, to prove, that it is Man's *right* and duty to *think freely*, under the mentioned limitations and adjuncts, I ſhall remark ſome Paſſages only, which may appear inconſiſtent with that Veneration for *revealed* Truths, that becomes thoſe who are profeſſed Chriſtians.

You argue, *pag.* 6. *If the Knowledge of no Truth be forbidden us by God, or hurtful to us, then we have* a right *to know any Truth.*

Qu. If God has declared ſome Truth in ſuch a manner, as to intend our knowing it at preſent but *in part*, and to be more perfectly known hereafter; have we *a right* to know that Truth *fully at preſent?* Againſt whom is that Right pleadable? Is it againſt God, who has made known *now* as much as ſuits our preſent State, though he has bounded our Knowledge as to what of it is unrevealed, and requires us to know no more than that which is revealed?

You

You say, *pag.* 10. *It is impossible that God, when he condescends to teach mankind by Writing or Books, should write as ill or worse than mortal Men, and act against the Rules of Art*, &c.— *Pag.* 11. *To understand the Matter of the Bible, requires the most* thinking *of all other Books; since to be master of the whole, a Man must be able to think justly in every Science and Art.*— *Pag.* 12. *Nay, the* Morality *of the Holy Scriptures is not to be precisely and distinctly understood, without an antecedent Knowledge of* Ethicks, *&c. So that no Duty whatsoever contained in Scripture, can be precisely and with certainty understood, without a Knowledge of the Law of Nature.*

Qu. 1. When God by the Bible intended to teach men *Divinity*, and not Trades, or common Arts or Sciences; is it rational to judge he writes *well* or *ill*, by the *aptitude* of his Writings to instruct men in the Knowledge of himself and his Will, (which is the end for which he wrote;) or by the *aptitude* of his Writings, to instruct men in Trades and common Arts and Sciences, which was not his end?

Qu. 2. When God sent his Word to direct in the Way of eternal Life, persons of all countreys and sorts, Young and Old, unlearned as well as learned, simple and more intelligent; is the *accuracy of Arts*, or is a conduciveness to affect

and

and impreſs *all ſorts*, in order to their compliance with the conditions of Eternal Life, the *beſt* rule of Writing? The Experience of all pious men (even the moſt learned) to this Day determine this.

Qu. 3. HAD it become the *Majeſty* of God, who dictates, and authoritatively commands, what we are to believe and do, to have written otherwiſe than he did?

Qu. 4. THE Word being written for all *future ages* of the World, as well as thoſe preſent, and it mentioning *occaſionally* ſome things in the Sphere of Nature according to the *received* Opinion of Mankind in *that age*; is it a diſhonour to the Word, as a rule of divine faith and manners, that we, in *after ages*, think we are more improved in Natural Philoſophy? By the ſame Rule, thoſe *former ages* had then diſputed the Truth of the Word, as a rule of divine faith and manners in their time; and all muſt do the ſame in *future ages* (when they ſhall have different notions,) if thoſe occaſional Expreſſions were now accommodated to the preſent prevailing Sentiments.

Qu. 5. MAY not one think juſtly in other Arts and Sciences, and yet be ignorant of thoſe Truths which were principally intended to be taught by the Word? And may not another profitably and ſavingly know thoſe Truths, and be very unſkilful

skilful in the other Arts and Sciences? The instances are common: The Philosopher stumbling at the Gospel, from a conceit of his Learning; the plain Man believes, and liveth the Word.

Qu. 6. WILL that man *think freely* to any great or godly purpose, who spends his whole time to be a *master* only of those parts of the whole Scripture, which he cannot be *master* of, unless as he is able to judge justly in every Science? (I write the word *master* with dislike.)

Qu. 7. IF an occasional Word in reference to Sailing, Husbandry, Pharmacy, make a precise Skill in those Arts necessary, to become *master* of the whole of the Scripture; will not the mention of *Christ*, *Holy Ghost*, *Angel*, *Heaven*, the stated *Term of Life*, the *Judgment Day*, and the like Subjects, (which include the principal Sum of Scripture, and as to which those words referring to Arts are used,) make it necessary, that we receive Divine Revelations, which only can give a certain instructive Account of these Things? And if we cannot comprehend the utmost of all those Revelations, is it not rational humbly to own, that our Ability to judge of some Parts of these sublimer Things, is not so proportionable to those, as it is to master sensible Arts and human Sciences, of which nevertheless no man is perfect Master?

Qu. 8. IF

Qu. 8. If a man has no antecedent Knowledge of *Ethicks*, but *acquires* it by Study of the Scripture, why may not he, as preciſely and certainly underſtand the *Morality* of the Scriptures, as by any other external Means? For where is the *Law of Nature* ſo fully explained, ſo certainly ſtated, and particularly applied, as in the Bible?

Qu. 9. Is not the Senſe of thoſe Words very ambiguous, or worſe; *No Duty whatſoever contained in the Scripture, can be preciſely and with certainty underſtood, without a Knowledge of the Law of Nature?* It's true, ſome degree of the Knowledge of the *Law of Nature* is neceſſary, to know the Duties enjoined by that Law; and yet thoſe, as they be recorded in the Scripture, may be known by us as that Law is there explained: But is it therefore true, that the *Scriptures* contain *no Duties* but what the *Law of Nature* contains? Or is it true, that we cannot know thoſe additional Duties *with certainty* upon Scripture Evidence? or that the unwritten *Law of Nature* can give us a more preciſe or *equal* underſtanding of thoſe Duties, as we may attain by what is recorded, explained, and eſtabliſhed, by the Scripture Revelation, ſeeing this is the way by which we come to the firſt notice, that God requires ſuch poſitive Duties?

You

You argue, *pag.* 13. *That if men have* no right *to* think freely, *they must, if they will have any Opinions, run into the grossest Absurdities in Principle and Practice.*

Qu. Does not this depend on the *due* Regulation of men's thoughts? For how great *mischief* in the Christian Church did *thinking*, when *free* from the restraints of the *Scriptures?* Papal Inventions discovered this: But the *Reformation* was made by casting away *Human Inventions*, and reducing Principles and Practices to the Rule of the *Word.* How little availed the *free-thinking* of *Pagans*, to rectify the prevailing false notions of a *Deity*, till Divine Revelation prescribed to their thoughts? And are there not multitudes of Christians, who think very justly, and practise answerably, who dare rely on the *Scriptures*, as the Guide and Limiter of their thoughts in matters of Religion?

From *pag.* 15. to *pag.* 25. you argue from *the Absurdities of an Eye-sight Faith, that* Priests *are needless* and *dangerous Guides:* And among *the various and contradictory Forms of Confession made at different times, (pag.* 17.) supposing one to be drawn *as the Standard of Eye-sight Faith*, you say, *(pag.* 18.) *The several Propositions will be said* by them *to be* above, *but* not contrary *to* Eye-sight; *it will be esteemed*

eſteemed dangerous truſting to carnal Eye-ſight, *&c.*

Qu. 1. AFTER you have told us, that ſo great Skill in all Arts and Sciences is neceſſary to enable men to underſtand the Scriptures; muſt we ſuppoſe *every man* as able to underſtand the Scripture, *without* the aſſiſtance of *any Teachers*, as they are to judge of a viſible Object by their bodily Eyes?

Qu. 2. IF the *bodily Eyes* cannot rightly diſcern, and judge of a propoſed Object, without a proper Light or Medium, can *our Reaſon* rightly diſcern, and judge of ſupernatural Truths, without the *Light* of Revelation to inform it?

Qu. 3. OUGHT Perſons of *weak Parts*, when tempted by ſubtil Deluders to deny the Chriſtian Religion, ſo far truſt to their *own Underſtanding*, as not to conſult men of greater Knowledge, to try whether they can ſolve their Doubts, and give them Reaſons ſufficient to eſtabliſh them in the Truth?

Qu. 4. Is it not an Advantage to mankind, that there is an *Office* inſtituted by Chriſt, to which none ought to be admitted without conſiderable *Abilities* to inſtruct men in the matters of Religion; and by which Office they are obliged ſtatedly, as *their Buſineſs*, to inſtruct, and to render their Inſtructions as uſeful as they can to men's practice of Godlineſs and Virtue; and

and this in a dependance on the *Divine Presence*, which is promised to be *with them*? Or can it be just, to deny a Subsistence to such as are faithful herein?

Qu. 5. WHEN the Persons invested in *this Office* are required by Christ Jesus, to put People on *searching the Scriptures*, and to exercise a Judgment of private Discretion, whether what they teach, require, and practise, be conformable to the Rules appointed in the Word; ought that *Office* to be condemned, if some Persons externally admitted to it, presume *against* its Prescriptions, to be *Lords of Men's Faith*, impose their own Dictates, or for ambitious or covetous Ends, employ their Labours to overthrow *religious or civil Rights?* Yea, must not such as endeavour to subvert this *Office*, have a malignant Design against Religion, Godliness, and Virtue? For who seeth not, that the promoting of those must be far less attended to, by Persons under no peculiar, solemn *Obligation?* yea, intellectual Qualifications for instructing others will be confined to a few, if not diminished in all, when none are designed for this Office; not to mention, how God may be provoked to give up a People to *judicial Blindness*, who shall reject so great a Benefit?

Qu. 6. WILL not your Censure of *Forms of Confession* be accounted an Accusation

ſation of that commonly called *the Apoſtle's Creed*, which is a Summary of what we are to believe; and of the *Decalogue*, which contains the Precept, reſpecting moſt Moral Duties; and of the *Lord's Prayer*, which is an Abridgement of what are to pray for?

Qu. 7. WHEN it's notorious, that there are ſenſible Objects *too remote*, or of *too ſmall* a Quantity, to be ſeen by our Eye, and ſundry things in Nature *too difficult* for our Underſtanding, (as the extent of the *Diviſibility of Matter*, and a thouſand other things;) is it a Wonder, that ſome *Propoſitions of Faith* ſhould be in ſome reſpects *above* our Reaſon at preſent, and *againſt* our falſe Reaſonings, though *not againſt* true Reaſon? Cannot my Reaſon be well informed, and ſure that a thing *exiſts*, and know in a good Degree *what* that is, unleſs it comprehends the *Manner* how it is?

Qu. 8, WILL it not be found too ſad a *Truth* to jeſt with, that *the carnal Mind diſcerneth not the Things of God, becauſe they are fooliſhneſs to him, and are ſpiritually diſcerned?* Do not *prevailing Luſts* of themſelves indiſpoſe the Mind, to credit the Reality, conſider the Importance, and feel the effectual Power of ſuch Truths, as tend to imbitter Obedience, and mortify the Dominion of thoſe Luſts, by introducing the oppoſite Graces and Virtues? And

And may not *these Lusts* also provoke God to abate assisting Helps, which conduce to enlighten the Mind? And are not those, who resolve to indulge their corrupt Hearts, very prone to embrace such false Opinions, as are necessary to quiet Conscience in their wicked Course?

You say, *pag.* 25, 26. *Any* restraint *whatsoever from Reason* on thinking, *is absurd: No just restraint can be put to my thinking, but some Argument which shews me, it is not lawful for me to think on the Subject I propose to do: As for instance, I propose to consider*, Whether the Christian Religion is founded on Divine Revelation? *but am told the great Danger and Sinfulness of thinking on that Subject*, &c.

Qu. 1. SHOULD any be branded with telling you so, who oft persuade men to *examine* and think of *the Grounds*, on which they believe, that the Christian Religion is founded on Divine Revelation; that so their Faith may be confirmed, and the Influence of revealed Truths be thereby the more effectual? Who are the true *Protestant Divines* who do otherwise, even when they warn men, that they *examine these Grounds* with a devout Mind, and not sceptically, or with evil Designs?

Qu. 2. Do not Christians owe that regard to what induced them upon *former Enquiries* to believe this, as not to doubt

of it, before they meet with ſome *good Reaſon*, to think it is not founded on Divine Revelation?

Qu. 3. OUGHT we not as diligently and impartially to ſearch for Arguments to prove this Truth, and to admit their Force as ſincerely and gladly, as we do thoſe new Arguments, which ſeem to diſprove it? A contrary Method diſcovers too plainly *an evil Heart of unbelief.*

Qu. 4. CAN you upon thinking come to a *certainty*, that the Chriſtian Religion is an *Impoſture*; unleſs it be upon better Evidences, than you may find of its being founded on Divine Revelation? And if you attempt this, muſt not you prove, either, (*1ſt*,) That God has not revealed *any Religion:* Or (*2dly*,) That he has revealed ſome *other Religion* different from the Chriſtian; which other you are obliged to follow? If you chuſe the *Firſt*, muſt not you prove, either that God *could not* give any ſuch Revelation, or that he *would not*, although the State of mankind rendred it ſo uſeful and neceſſary? But if you fix on the *Second*, does not your own Scheme require, that every Part of that *other Religion* be more agreeable to the Law of Nature, more God-like to enjoin, and that it's founded on a Divine Revelation better atteſted?

Qu. 5. WHEN you enquire into *Evidences*, that the Chriſtian Religion is found-

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ed on Divine Revelation; may you reject all the *former External Evidences*, whereby God attested those Revelations to be from him, unless you see them repeated? For instance, If God did work *Miracles* for the Conviction of *Infidels*, when he introduced the Christian Religion; and transmits a certain account to us, that such Miracles were so wrought; ought we who live in a Time when, and Place where, this Religion is become effectual and received, to deny the *former Miracles* to be any Testimony at all, unless God will condescend to produce the same sensible supernatural Effects of his Power in our sight? And consequently, that he must do the like from Age to Age, in the sight of every Person, who shall be obliged to entertain the Christian Religion? Upon the same Reason, must every particular Man reject all former inspired Revelation, unless he feel *the same* self-evidencing Testimony of God's speaking those Things to him, as the Prophets and Apostles experienced?

Qu. 6. When we find the Scripture-Revelation, explaining and requiring Obedience to all the real Precepts of the *Law of Nature*, and inforcing it by the most cogent Arguments, with proper Directions; and that whatsoever more is enjoined, directly tends to promote Godliness and Devotion; does it most become us,

to accuſe theſe Revelations of Impoſture, becauſe of ſome *Difficulties* therein; or from a Senſe of the ſublimeneſs of ſome Points, and the ſhortneſs of our Capacities, to *ſuſpend* our Judgment concerning thoſe Difficulties?

You argue, *pag.* 27. *Free-thinking is upon experience the only proper Means to deſtroy the Devil's Kingdom among men.* And *pag.* 28. you add, *Thus the Devil is baniſhed intirely from the* United Provinces.

Qu. 1. Does not *the Devil's Kingdom* conſiſt in oppoſing the Goſpel, hindering Reformation, promoting the dominion of Sin, the ignorance and profaneneſs of People, Perſecution, and perverting the Minds, and turning them from Chriſt and his Truth, as much as it conſiſts in *Witchcraft?* The Word tells us, the deluded *are led captive by the Devil*, and he *rules in the Children of Diſobedience:* Or is the Devil *baniſhed*, where any of theſe prevail?

Qu. 2. Cannot the Devil ſerve his Purpoſes in oppoſition to the Kingdom of Chriſt, by *forbearing* Apparitions and contracting with Witches, and the like, in a Chriſtian Country; when he has a proſpect of *regaining* his Empire by *Infidelity* and *Sadduciſm?* May not his Malice vent itſelf againſt ſome few ignorant wretches, by

by Witchcraft, *&c.* in *Pagan* Countries, or in Places where Christianity is so strictly and generally professed, that the People are averse to speculative Infidelity, and there are few or no fit Instruments to promote it? And yet, may not he *intermit* such Apparitions and Witchcrafts, *&c.* in those Places, when he finds them more inclined to renounce Christian Principles, and that many are qualified and active to undermine the Faith of the Gospel, especially as to *things unseen?* Is not he, in such a case, too sagacious to confirm the staggering, and to confute his bewitched Emissaries, by such Demonstrations of the Being of *Spirits*, and thereby of the Truth of many other things, from the disbelief whereof he knows his Kingdom would be far more enlarged, than by his Impressions on the Bodies of some poor ignorant People?

Qu. 3. When you say, *Free-thinking* is upon experience *the only proper Means* to destroy the Devil's Kingdom; and add in *Italick* Letters, *pag.* 28. that *casting him out miraculously*, multiplying Priests, *&c.* have *often increased, but never wholly destroyed his Power:* Have not you Reason to fear the *Power* of *Satan's Delusions*, unless you can demonstrate the Scripture, and the most credible History, to be Forgeries? Did not Christ and his Followers *miraculously cast out Devils?* Did not the

Goſpel prevail more againſt *Idolatry* and *Pagan* Blindneſs, than all that your *Heathen Free-thinkers* ſaid or wrote? nay, were not moſt ſuch the greateſt Supports of the Devil's Kingdom? And is it not ſtill the common Experience, that the faithful endeavours of godly Magiſtrates and Miniſters, and the exemplary Lives of Chriſtians, conduce more to the Deſtruction of the Devil's Kingdom in the Hearts and Lives of People, than *all that Free-thinking*, which ever was, or ſtill is, employed in undermining the Foundations of the Chriſtian Religion? And is any man ſo blind, (if not infatuated,) as not to foreſee, that if Chriſtianity were overcome, the *Authority* as well as the *Power* of the Devil muſt be acknowledged by all Nations, and *Heatheniſm* prove *a thicker Darkneſs* than *Popery* it ſelf? (though you ſay otherwiſe, *pag.* 28.) But bleſſed be God, ſuch as obey the Goſpel are ſure, that *true Chriſtianity* ſhall in due time *triumph* over both, and their reſpective Supporters too.

You ſay, *pag.* 33, 34. *If the ſureſt and beſt Means of arriving at Truth, lies in* Free-thinking, *then the whole Duty of Man with reſpect to Opinions, lies only in* Free-thinking; *becauſe he who* thinks freely, *does his beſt towards being in the right, and conſequently does all that God, who can require*

require no more of any Man than that he should do his best, can require of him; and should he prove mistaken in any Opinions, he must be as acceptable to God, as if he received none but right Opinions.

Qu. 1. CAN God require no more, and can Man do no more towards *being in the right* in his Opinions in the matters of Religion, than to *think freely?* May not God require Prayer, for his Assistance to discern the Truth? May not he require us to call upon him, to give us Faith to receive the Truth? May not he require a humble Reverence, a Love to Truth, an honest Purpose to obey it, an Abstinence from what provokes God to with-hold his help from us, and his restraints on Satan? May not he require us, to mortify those Lusts, which blind and prejudice the Mind, and faithfully to practise what we already know? Is God *unjust* or *impotent*, in requiring such things with our *Free-thinking*? Or cannot Man do these, as well as *think freely?* The Light of Nature must allow, if not enjoin, Things which have in them such a tendency to thinking freely with good Success.

Qu. 2. IF a Man by a neglect of those Things, receive such false Opinions, as the Scripture calls *damnable Heresies*, and Errors *whereby Men make Shipwreck of Faith*, can you think, that Man is *as accept-*

able to God by an Opinion that is so contrary to Divine Revelations, as by an Opinion which is according to them? Is a *God of Truth* so indifferent to Truth and Error, that when he has given forth his Revelations, it's *alike to him*, whether Men believe them or not? Is it *no matter*, if their Opinions allow them to blaspheme his Son, ridicule his Spirit, deny the Resurrection, make a Jest of the Corruption of Human Nature and Hell-Torments, *&c?* Would God be *no more pleased* with them, if they conceived honourable Thoughts of his Son and Spirit, and just Notions of every revealed Doctrine? By what Rule do you put God under a Necessity to *accept alike*, where there is so great a contrariety, as receiving important Truths, and important Falshoods? Are such Men *alike* to you, or to any Man of Sense.

Qu. 3. WILL it not follow, that your *Free-thinkers* are *as acceptable* to God, when they *act consonantly* to their erroneous Opinions, as those Believers who act according to the true Principles of Religion? Saint *Paul* was once such a *Free-thinker*; Acts xxvi. 9. for he *verily thought within himself, he ought to do many things contrary to the Name of* Jesus *of* Nazareth: But did not he after- 1 Tim. i. 13. 15. wards account himself *the chief of Sinners*, for having done such Things? or did his *Ignorance* excuse him from standing in need

of

of pardoning *Mercy*, and thinking himself *unworthy to be called an Apostle?*

Qu. 4. DID not many whom you applaud as *Free-thinkers*, entertain such Opinions as directed them to practise what the Holy God must abhor? Some ascribed all to *Chance*, and hence despised all religious Worship, all dependance on God, and Thanksgivings to him for benefits. Others received *unworthy Notions* of God, and thence utter'd the most horrid Blasphemies; not to mention the Idolatry, Self-murder, *&c.* warranted by the Opinions embraced by others.

FROM *pag.* 35. to *pag.* 40. *Superstition* is treated of as *a great Evil*; and your *Censure is just*, as to *Pagan Fooleries*, and *Papal Additions* to the Rules prescribed by Christ for Worship, *&c.* nor can it be denied, that *groundless Scruples* and *Fears* among Christians *are blameable.* But the Point is carried far beyond these in sundry Passages. For, *pag.* 38, 39. you say, *The Superstitious make God talk to all Mankind* from Corners, *and consequently require things of Men under the* [Sanction or] *Penalty of Misery in the next World, of which they are incapable of having any convincing Evidence that they come from him. They make him* (*who* equally beholds all the Dwellers upon Earth,) *to have favourite Nations and People, without any consi-*

deration

deration of Merit. They make him put other Nations under disadvantages without any demerit, &c. *These Men have no quiet in their own Minds; they rove about in search of* saving Truth, *&c. and neglecting what God speaks plainly to the whole World, take up with what they suppose he has communicated to a few; and thereby believe and practise such things, in which they can never have Satisfaction.*

Qu. 1. Does God's *equally beholding all the Dwellers upon Earth*, prove, that God may not exert his Sovereignty, in favouring some Nations above others? He who does so in external Advantages, is not confined from giving greater helps for Salvation to some than others. Is not his giving some Men stronger Faculties, to judge of what God speaks to all mankind in order to future Happiness, some help towards obtaining that Happiness, which they of duller understandings have not?

Qu. 2. If the Gospel is an Advantage in order to Salvation, as it contributes to our fuller Knowledge of God and his Will, and gives the strongest Motives, and best Directions to render Men obedient; what *Merit* can any plead for obtaining it, or what freedom from *Demerit* could be pretended, when all Nations (except the *Jews*, and they oft,) were for many Ages impious and idolatrous? But if the Light of Nature is sufficient,

where,

where, or when did God deprive them of it?

Qu. 3. OUGHT the Testimony of *Isaiah*, (whom you commend as a *Free-thinker*,) be received? He asserts, *In the last Days, the Mountain of the Lord's House shall be established on the Top of the Mountains, and all Nations shall flow unto it; and many People shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord's House, and he will teach us of his Ways, and we will walk in his Paths: For out of* Zion *shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from* Jerusalem. Was not *Jerusalem* a *Corner*, which long enjoyed the means of knowing these Ways of the Lord above other Places? And were not the Nations under disadvantage, 'till they came to know where to find those means, and were made Partakers of them as received from *Jerusalem?* Or did God put them under that disadvantage before, by giving some better helps to others, when he left to them what they were possessed of, and what you judge sufficient? Isa. ii. 2, 3.

Qu. 4. WHAT Things does God *speak plainly to the whole World*, which sincere Christians *neglect*? Are there any Duties evidently required by the *Law of Nature*, which the Christian Religion confirms not? or does the *Christian*

tian Law allow any thing, which the *Law of Nature* forbids?

Qu. 5. Does not God ſpeak *as evidently* to Chriſtians, by his *revealed Word* annexed to the Law of Nature; as he ſpeaks to other Nations by the *Law of Nature alone?* And had not the *Pagans* as different Apprehenſions, about what the *Law of Nature* required, diſcovered, and directed; as Chriſtians have about *their Rule?* and far more and greater, than Chriſtians have concerning what the *Law of Nature* requires and dictateth? Your Free-thinker *Varro* will tell you the many contrary Opinions, which the *Heathens* received concerning God.

Qu. 6. Is it *unjuſt* or *impoſſible* for God to reveal ſome Truths, and enjoin ſome poſitive Precepts, *beſides* thoſe which he ſignified by the *Light of Nature?* How is he obliged to give no further Diſcoveries of himſelf and his Purpoſes? Why muſt he give no further Directions concerning his Worſhip? Why may he not promiſe, and more explicitly manifeſt, what Rewards he will confer on the Righteous, than the Light of Nature declares and aſſures Men of? Or why can he not further repreſent, what Sorts and Degrees of Puniſhment he will judge proportioned to the Aggravations of Men's Crimes? For herein you know the wicked are ſo favourable

vourable to themselves, as to be unapt to infer them from the Law of Nature.

Qu. 7. WILL not *your own Notions of the goodness of God*, incline you to think him concerned to instruct and reform Mankind? And will it not follow, that he would reveal such things as before mentioned, when for many Ages the *Light of Nature* was *ineffectual* to deliver the World from their Blindness, Idolatries, Irreligion, Carnality, Barbarities, and neglects of the Labour necessary to know their Duty, and to be convinced of their Sins? He knew also their violent Propensions and Temptations to all those Sins, as well as their Aversion and Impediments to the Exercise of Virtue, and much more of Godliness.

Qu. 8. WHEN the Nations (not excepting *Greece*,) were *so universally ignorant* of God, and his Worship, and a future State of Retribution, notwithstanding what you term *his plain speaking to the World*; Is it not more probable, that those *few* among the *Heathens* who arrived to any juster Notions of such things, derived them either *mediately* from some Divine Revelations given to others, (as *Bochart* and others collect,) or from *immediate Inspirations* communicated to them, for their own and others Benefit; than that they acquired them only from their own Attention to natural Light?

Qu. 9.

Qu. 9. CAN you expect to be believed by any understanding serious *Christians*, that they are *incapable of having any convincing Evidence*, that the Revelations on which their Religion is founded are from God? If then they are convinced of this, all of them must therefore be reproached as *Fools*, who admit Convictions without the Evidence, which every wise Man would require? But what if they cannot inform you, how far their inward Disposition, and Divine Illumination, contribute a convincing Force to that Evidence, which does not persuade such as are Strangers thereto? Yet they can declare to you the Reasons, why they think so well of the Evidence, as to wonder how any are *capable of rejecting* that Degree of it, which *may be known* by every honest Enquirer.

CAN they resist Conviction that *the Gospel is of God*, which has *such a Testimony*, that none but the true God can give; a Gospel in it self *so Divine*, and subservient and effectual to holy Purposes, that none but God could dictate; and *so far from contradicting his Law of Nature*, that it explaineth, confirmeth, and inforceth Man's observance of it? Can a
2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. Gospel thus glorious be *hid to them*, when it *shines into them* with a Light resistible by none, whose *Minds are not blinded by the God of this World?* For,

1. To

1. To them it's evident, that to the Lord JESUS CHRIST agree *all the Characters*, by which God described the *Messias* to his *Prophets* in all the former Ages of the World: And in him were answer'd *all the Types*, which God had instituted to prefigure him. God oft acknowledged him by his *Angels*; he attested his Authority and Mission, at his *Baptism*, and at other times, by *a Voice from Heaven*. What greater Testimony could be given, than by his *raising him from the Dead*, after the great Things that attended his Death, and the *Miracles* which he performed in his Life in Attestation of his Holy Doctrine? Our Lord was unspotted in his *Life*; the *Miracles* he performed were *real*, in *open View*, for the *good of Men*, and declared by him *before-hand*, as what he would work to prove, that he came from God, and to which he appealed. He *propheſied* of his own *Death*, with the Manner of it; he foretold his *Resurrection*, the ruin of the *Temple*, the success of his Gospel by *improbable* Instruments, the Conversion of the *Gentiles* against the great Power, Learning, and all the established Customs and Prejudices which obstructed it. He promised to send *the Holy Ghost* to his Apostles, with Power to give him to others, and to work *Miracles in his Name:* And this *Power of Miracles* remained some Hundreds of Years in the Church

Church ſo evidently, that *Tertullian* and others appeal to their Enemies of greateſt Power, for the Truth and Trial thereof. —Theſe amazing things were foretold by him, to be wrought as the *Effects* of his *Reſurrection*: The *Spirit of Prophecy* was alſo in many of his Followers, and declared to be *the Teſtimony of the bleſſed Jeſus*.—And may not theſe now be eſteemed (though a ſmall Part of what might be mentioned,) ſome *External Evidence*, that our Religion, which Chriſt and his Servants publiſhed, is founded on a Revelation which is Divine?

2. We have further grounds to believe, becauſe theſe are contained in the Scriptures as *the Teſtimony* of Chriſt's *inſpired Diſciples*, who are moſt credible Witneſſes as to Matters of Fact: For they could not be *deceived themſelves*; and were mean Men, who could have no View to ſerve any *ſecular Intereſt*; and Men, who if they *believed* what Chriſt or themſelves had *ſaid*, they could expect nothing but *eternal Miſery* if they deceived others, and in this World *the greateſt Sufferings* if they publiſhed them as Truths: In a word, they were Men, who did *ſeal* thoſe Truths *with their Blood*, ſome in *Jeruſalem* and *Jewry*, the Places *where*, and at the very Time *when*, theſe things were acted; not to mention the great Number of *other Martyrs* in that Age. Need it be added, that

that these Matters of Fact are conveyed down by many other ways with more Advantages, to assure us of their certainty, than any other History can pretend to?

3. THE *Miracles, &c.* thus recorded are the *less exceptionable*, because they attest as Rules of Practice, the improved *Law of Nature*, and no *positive* Duties or Institutions, but what are exactly suited to our Estate *as remediable*, and which God has promised to bless. Moreover, as to the attested *Articles of Faith*, most of them are self-evident Truths; none of them impossible to be true; the most speculative are useful to practice, and so far intelligible; and as far as any part of any of them is incomprehensible, God does not require us to understand that.

4. WE think, that the *Attestations* being thus solemn, and the *Matters attested* of such Importance to future Ages, it would be the Concern of Providence, to have them transmitted *secure* against all Attempts, to render them insufficient, or unfit to answer the saving Designs of those Revelations.

5. BUT you may also meet with many Christians, who will tell you, they are capable of discerning in these Scriptures (now in our hands) *intrinsick Evidences* of their being Divine; and that they are thereby convinced, the Christian Religion is founded on Divine Revelation. They see

the *Truth* of many Propheſies and Promiſes, by their *accompliſhment*. They behold the *godlike Deſign*, Purity, Spirituality, Power and Tendency of the ſeveral Parts, (as well as the Harmony of the Whole,) to *ſanctify* Perſons in their inward Diſpoſitions, and regulate their Behaviour towards God, and other Men, and themſelves. And they find, that as they advance in a divine Life, they have more reaſon to approve, admire, and reliſh thoſe Truths, as agreeable to the Nature of that Life, and as much conducive to its Perfection, as they felt them to be at firſt to their Converſion from Sin to God.

6. THEY can alſo plead, if it were requiſite, that it is againſt all common Senſe, that the Scriptures could be *corrupted* in things of moment; becauſe their Copies were ſoon ſcattered far and near, and carefully watched and examined by *Jews* and *Gentiles*, Friends and Enemies, Orthodox and Heterodox; and alſo ſtill preſerved by the Church, as its great Charter, Rule, and Treaſure.

Qu. 10. ARE you well acquainted with true Chriſtians, if you can think, that by *taking up* with Scripture Revelations, they believe and practiſe ſuch things *in which they can never have Satisfaction?* If you had ſaid, they could not come to *a Satisfaction about what they believed and practiſed*,

tised, without this Revelation, or against it, they would assent to it. But as they cannot take up with this Revelation, if they *neglect what God speaks plainly to the whole World*; because the Scripture containeth the *Law of Nature* more explicitly and fully than it's any where else recorded: So they give the most certain Evidence the Matter is capable of, that they are arrived at *full Satisfaction* in what they believe and practise according to Scripture Rules; for they deny themselves, mortify their Lusts, sacrifice their Estates, Places, Honour and Lives, in Obedience to the Precepts of the Word; and as far as they are *diligent* to walk by this Light, they live and die in a *true Peace* and Joy, founded on the satisfying Evidence they have of the Certainty of the Gospel-Revelation: And such of them as want this Peace, will inform you, that their *uneasiness* proceeds from the *defects* of their Obedience to the Gospel, and not from a *Suspicion* that the Gospel is not true.

Qu. 11. MAY not such Truths be justly called *saving Truths*, and not Trifles, to the Belief and Practice whereof God promiseth *Salvation*; and threatens to *damn* such, as disbelieve and disobey those Truths?

Qu. 12. MUST not such as live under the Gospel, be in *greater Danger* of fall-

ing under that *damning Sentence*, for rejecting thoſe Truths; than ſuch as never heard the Word?

Qu. 13. Is it *Wiſdom* to banter ſuch *ſaving Truths*, and their Sanction, unleſs Men can infallibly prove, that it's *impoſſible*, that thoſe ſhould be Truths, and that God has ſo threatened the Rejecters of them? A Taſk too hard for the boldeſt Wit, though he could offer ſome Exceptions to God's threatning to damn Men, for not believing ſome more doubtful, and leſs important Truths.

You add, *pag.* 37. "*Happy is the* "*Man, (ſays the divine* Virgil,) *who has* "*diſcovered the Cauſes of Things, and is* "*thereby cured of all kind of Fears, even* "*of Death it ſelf, and all the noiſe and* "*din of Hell.*" *For by* Free-thinking alone *Men are capable of knowing, that a perfectly Good, Juſt, Wiſe, and powerful Being, made and governs the World; and from this Principle they know, that he can require nothing of Men in any Country or Condition of Life, but that whereof he has given them an opportunity of being convinced by Evidence and Reaſon in that Place*, &c. And, *that an honeſt and rational Man can have no juſt Reaſon to fear any thing from him.*

Not to enquire, how *the divine Virgil* ſhews himſelf ſo well acquainted with God,

God, the universal Cause, as to direct Men, how to be *cured* (rightly) *of all Fears*, even *of Death*, and *all the noise and* din *of Hell?* Nor to ask, why *Strepitus* is rendered *noise* and *din* too? I ask,

Qu. 1. How few Nations, either now have not, or once had *an opportunity* to know the Gospel; and of being acquainted *by degrees* with the Evidence that it is from God? And if they add *a wilful neglect* of this opportunity; to their Idolatry, and wicked Courses against the Light they have; must God act against his own Nature, if he give them not *the same degree* of Evidence as to others? But our concern is not, to penetrate into God's Transactions with *Heathens*, (which are more secret;) though certainly even they are such, as become God, and will be vindicated by him: We ought to be sollicitous about *the Rule*, by which God will *judge us*, who enjoy the Gospel.

Q. 2. MAY not God require of Men living in a *Christian Country*, that they *believe* and *obey the Gospel*, upon the Evidence he has given of the Truth of the Gospel? And if such know God to be a *just Governour*, must not they expect he'll *punish* their Neglects and Contempts? But of this else-where.

Qu. 3. HAS not *every Law* of God, published to Men in a State of Trial, *a penal Sanction?* Can you suppose God so

unconcerned whether his Laws be obſerved, that the Tranſgreſſors even of the *Law of Nature* are obnoxious to no Puniſhment?

Q. 4. Is it *Superſtition* for a guilty Sinner to be *afraid* of the threatned Puniſhment, when conſcious of his Fault and Danger? It's the Office of *Conſcience* to charge Guilt, and put him to *fear*: And when it does ſo, rational Self-Love will prompt him to exerciſe *that fear*, which is implanted in his Nature, as a means of his governableneſs and ſafety. Will it not follow hence, that the *Law of Nature* may be tranſgreſſed with Impunity; or that ſuch *Free-thinkers* encourage ſtupid Security, that ſo they may ridicule *Hell-Torments* upon the Authority of *Pagan* Authors, while they call *true Religion* by the Name of *Superſtition*, which moſt of them diſtinguiſhed?

Qu. 5. WHEN you ſay, that *an honeſt and rational Man has no juſt Reaſon to fear any thing from God*, can you ſuppoſe this very Man *innocent* from all Tranſgreſſions of the *Law of Nature?* Has not he offended in many Things againſt that Rule; yea, does not he continue to do ſo in many Inſtances?

Qu. 6. Is he *a rational Man*, who muſt own he has ſinned, and that God is a holy, wiſe, and juſt *Governour*; and yet can be confident *he is ſafe*, though he has

has no good Evidence, that God will not punish him?

Qu. 7. WHAT certain Evidence can any who *reject the Gospel* have, that God *will not punish* them for the Sins they committed against the *Law of Nature*; yea against the most extensive Explications of the Precepts of that Law, which they may find in the Gospel; yea, and for disobeying the Gospel?

Qu. 8. IF Men conclude themselves *safe*, because they sin from a *fatal Necessity*, would not that be to deny themselves to be Subjects of *Moral Government*, although they profess to own God to be their Governour? Or is it good Reasoning, that because God forbears *for some time* to punish them, that therefore he will *never* punish them? or to infer *Impunity hereafter*, because they receive some common Benefits at present? Or can they collect a certain Evidence of Impunity, from what God is *at free Liberty* to do or not do? This is no other, than to be certain of obtaining that, which God as an arbitrary Agent may withhold, as well as grant.

Qu. 9. FROM which of the *Perfections* of the true God, who is supreme Governour, can the *Rejecters of the Gospel* come to a Certainty, that God *will not punish* their Sins against the *Law of Nature*?—Can they argue it from his *Holi-*

neſs? when as a Holy God, he muſt hate Sin, as it's repugnant to his Nature, and therefore an Evil too great not to *deſerve* Puniſhment.—If they infer it from his *Juſtice*; will not this adjudge the Sinner to *bear the Puniſhment* which he deſerves? —If they infer it from his *Wiſdom*, they muſt conclude, that God will *deal with Tranſgreſſors*, as if he made a light Matter of their Affronts, obſtructed their Obedience, encouraged their Rebellion, and tempted them to deſpiſe both him, and his Laws.—Or can Sinners found any certain expectations of Impunity, upon the *Goodneſs* of God? He is good, but can they think that to be the Goodneſs of *a God*, which would incline him who is Governour of the World, to grant an Impunity, that muſt reflect on his Holineſs, Juſtice and Wiſdom; that muſt proſtitute the Honour of his Government, and fruſtrate the Ends of it, by giving the reſt of Mankind occaſion to think, they incur *no future Danger* by Diſobedience? Moreover we ſee, that notwithſtanding the Goodneſs of God, he inflicts ſo many Puniſhments on ſome Sinners *at preſent*, as may give others (yea, and theſe if unreformed,) ground to expect a *future* Vengeance.

Qu. 10. SHOULD Sinners plead as a further Support to their Hopes, that Mankind is by Nature *habitually corrupt* and prone to Sin, and averſe to Obedience; would

would not this be to expect Impunity, by *impeaching God* as unholy, or weak; in that he formed the *root of Mankind* with such irregular and impure Inclinations, and that without any demerit on Man's part? A Charge far more reflecting on God, than it can be to affirm, that *Adam*'s Apostacy was the Origin of this Disorder in his Posterity. I need not insinuate, that if the *depravedness* of Human Nature were granted to be this Way derived, *Free-thinkers* would find more rational and certain Evidence for most of the Principles of revealed Religion, than they can find for the *Impunity* of a Sinner who rejects the Gospel; or for his being *justly fearless* of the Punishments, to which he is obnoxious for violating any of the Laws of Nature?

Qu. 11. If any Man who *rejects the Gospel* pretend to *Innocency*, must not he be *unacquainted* with himself, and with the Law of Nature; or else accuse the *Law of Nature* to be *very imperfect*, as not forbidding all Evil in Heart and Life, nor commanding all that's Good, and fit to be obtain'd and done by men? But men will find God's Laws to bear the impress of his Nature, and not to be variable, or to be measur'd by men's ignorance, lusts, or fancies.

Q. 12. The *Gospel* indeed gives a satisfactory Account, how a *penitent Believer*

liever may be certain, that he ſhall eſcape all *deſtructive Puniſhments*, though he has oft tranſgreſſed the *Law of Nature:* For it contains a Promiſe of *Pardon* to ſuch, upon a *Satisfaction* made by Chriſt, which ſubſerves and ſecures the Ends of God's Government, and repreſents the Glory and Harmony of the Divine Perfections. But what Intereſt in this can any *Rejecters of the Goſpel* expect? ſeeing they *tread under foot the Blood of the Redeemer as a profane Thing*, and are condemned by the *Goſpel Law*, as well as by the *Law of Nature.*

FURTHER you ſay, *pag.* 37, 38. *That God being incapable of having any Addition made to his Power or Happineſs, and wanting nothing, can* require nothing *of Men for his own ſake, but only for Man's ſake; and conſequently, that all Actions and Speculations, which are of* no uſe *to Mankind,* [*as ſinging or dancing, eating or drinking,* &c. *(in which the greateſt part of the* Heathen Worſhip *conſiſted,) or the Belief of* Tranſubſtantiation *or* Conſubſtantiation, *or of any Doctrines not taught by the* Church of England,] *either* ſignify nothing at all *with God, or elſe* diſpleaſe him, *but can never render a Man more acceptable to him.*

Qu. 1. THOUGH God can *require nothing* of men *for his own ſake*, to make him

him more powerful or happy; does it follow, that he can *require nothing* of men, *in Acknowledgement* of his Dominion and Perfections, and of their Dependance on him? One you call *a Free-thinker*, saith, *God made all Things for himself*; and must he *require nothing* from man, with an intent of receiving *any Homage* of Praise or Service from him? He has wise and good Purposes to serve by men in this world, which tend to his Honour; and may he not command men to subserve such Purposes? Is it not rational, that we *do all Things to the Glory* of the Author of our Being, and of all Benefits? and must it be against Reason, to *design his Glory* in any Thing we do? Prov. xvi. 4.

Qu. 2. CANNOT God *for the sake of mankind* require some things, which men *think not* to be *for their Good?* Vast Nations have long thought many things required by the *Law of Nature*, to be unprofitable and hurtful to mankind. And are not men capable of *wanting some things* to make them happy, which are more and greater than those of which they are at present sensible? Or can men understand by the Light of Nature, all that is necessary to their Improvement and Felicity in both Worlds, and what's conducive thereto, as fully as God knows these?

Qu. 3. Is it not *more rational* to judge, that whatever God requires of men, is some

ſome way or other *uſeful* to them; than that God cannot require that Thing, which they know not *the way how* it becomes uſeful?

Qu. 4. CANNOT God require of men ſome things, as ſubſervient to his Glory, or as means by which he will communicate his Bleſſings, which ſeem *uſeleſs* to ſome men? To inſtance, *ſinging* his Praiſes, *hearing* his Word, *&c.* Nay, what if he makes choice of what appears *contemptible* to ſome Perſons, that he may the more manifeſt his own Power, *hide Pride from man*, convince us of our Dependance on him, and that his Prerogative and Authority are not to be limited by his Creatures?

Q. 5. CANNOT God *by his Inſtitution* and *promiſed Bleſſing*, make ſuch Things *uſeful* to men, which in their own Nature, and to the Eye of Senſe, *appear inſufficient* for that Purpoſe? If he command us to *eat and drink at the Lord's Table*, in Commemoration of his Death; and promiſeth us in ſo doing, Communion with him, and Improvement of Grace and Comfort; what Evidence have you, that our *eating and drinking* as he appoints us, ſhall *not be uſeful* to ſuch Ends? Even *Naaman*'s bodily Cure was effected, by what he thought impoſſible to effect it.

Q. 6. HAVE we any Reaſon to judge, that they who in Obedience to God, and Faith

Faith in his Promise, *observe* the meanest of *his Institutions*, do not please God, and may not expect the Benefits promised by him? Or is it the best way to please him, and obtain those Benefits, to *neglect his Institutions*, and contemn them, as *useless* to Men, and *unfit* for God to appoint?

Qu. 7. WILL those humble devout Christians, who attend the *Ordinances* of God's external Worship in the manner he prescribes, and who experience the *Aptitude* as well as Benefit of them, be persuaded, that they are either *useless* to them, or *no Part* of their Homage to God, or of that Profession which he exacts from his Followers? *Sacraments* are in their account *of great use*, as distinguishing Badges, and assuring Seals; and every one who believes that *Christ died a Sacrifice for our Sins*, can discern the *aptitude* of the external Representation of his Death by the *Lord's Supper*, to excite their Graces and holy Affections.

Qu. 8. MUST all these Truths you call *Speculations*, (as well as *Actions*,) be *useless to mankind*, because they are so to some men? May not men of equal Honesty, Diligence and Understanding, as confidently affirm what they know and experience? They see, how those *speculative Doctrines* direct and influence them in Acts of internal Worship, and contribute to a Christian Life. Nor is it *unaccountable*, how they and others *so differ* about

about the uſefulneſs of ſuch Speculations: For *they* believe them, *others* believe them not: They reverence Goſpel-Revelations, others ſeem to deſpiſe them: They pray for the teachings of the Spirit, others ridicule them: They take the Word of God for the Rule by which they judge of Truths, eſpecially ſuch as could not be diſcovered but by Revelation; others make their own Reaſon (though refuſing the Light of the Word,) to be the Rule by which they judge of ſuch Truths: They exerciſe themſelves in what *both* the Chriſtian and Natural Religion require; others confine themſelves to Natural Religion only, (if they exerciſe any part of it:) They are content to know as much, and as far, as they are capable of knowing; others reject the whole Goſpel, becauſe their *finite Minds* are incapable to comprehend all that belongs to the *ſublimeſt Doctrines:* They apply what they know of all Doctrines of Faith to practical Purpoſes; others look at them as empty and falſe Speculations.

Qu. 9. Do you act *ſincerely*, when you ſay, *The belief of any Doctrine* not taught *by the* Church of England, *ſignifies nothing with God*, &c? Do you mean by this Exception, that the belief of all the Doctrines *taught* by the *Church of England*, does ſignify ſomething with God, to render us acceptable to him? If ſo, our belief

lief of the sacred *Trinity*, and of all the *Fundamentals* of the Christian Faith, is *of great use* to render us acceptable to God. But when this is so directly contradicted by many Passages in your Book, it must pass for a *Banter*, or a *Blind*.

You tell us after this, *pag.* 38. *By means of all this, a Man may possess his Soul in peace, as having an expectation of enjoying all the good things which God can bestow, and no fear of any future Misery or Evil from his hands; and the very worst of his State can only be, that he is pleasantly deceived.*

Qu. 1. Can what you refer to by *all this*, be a just Ground of this *peace* and *expectation*? What if Men *neglect* to use the Opportunities they have to be convinced of what God requires? Or what if they also omit and *refuse to perform*, what they are convinced God does require of them, and *do what's contrary?* Are not both too common? And yet such as you call *happy*, may be guilty of all these.

Qu. 2. Or if you mean, that *an honest rational Man* may by means of *all this*, be possessed of *this peace*; ought you not to express that, and describe what you intend by *an honest rational Man?* For if your *rational Man* is no more, than one capable of knowing and judging of the Truth of Propositions, and arguing thereon; surely such a Man with a *wicked* Heart

Heart and Life can have *no true Peace* now, nor juſtly *expect* thoſe good Things. Or if by *honeſt Man*, you intend no more than one *juſt to Men*; may not ſuch a Man notwithſtanding his Juſtice to Men, be *unjuſt to God?* And if ſo, hath he a right to ſuch *peace* and *expectations?*

Qu. 3. Is it an eaſy Thing for *honeſt rational Men*, if ſober and of tender Conſciences, who live under the Goſpel, *ſo to reſiſt* the Evidences of its Truth, and be *ſo certain* of its being a Forgery, as *always* to enjoy *inward Peace?* Will no Fears diſturb them, upon reviews of that Infidelity, Contempt, and Omiſſions, againſt which that Goſpel denounceth the Wrath of God, and eternal Damnation?

Qu. 4. Upon what Evidence excluſive of Divine Revelation, can any Man *expect* to enjoy *all the good things*, which God *can give?*—A Believer has ſufficient notice in the *Goſpel* of a real Happineſs in both Worlds, and he hath God's Promiſe upon which to ground his Expectation; and yet he muſt think leſs will make him *happy*, than *all the good things* which an Infinite God *can beſtow.*—But where in the *Book of Nature* is this large Charter to be found? Many of your commended *Free-thinkers* deny the *Immortality* of the Soul: Such find no ground by the Light of Nature to *expect* many good Things *after Death*, or that God can give them Immortality.

Immortality. Others of them speak of *a future State* with the greatest *Uncertainty*. But did any ever pretend, that God in the *Law of Nature* gave any Promise specifying *the Kind*, and *Degree*, of what good things he would give? Or can his Justice or Goodness be accused, if he is so arbitrary as not to give *all that he can bestow*, when he gave them no ground for such undue expectations?

Qu. 5. Is *a future State* so uncertain, that to persuade Men to use your prescribed Means against *Superstition* and fears of *the din of Hell*, you use these words as an Argument, *viz. The very worst of his State can only be, that he is pleasantly deceived?* Many *Heathens*, besides *Socrates*, and *Cicero*, seem more assured of a Life of Retribution, from the present methods of Providence. But is it not strange, that if God as a Governour *speaks so plainly to all the World* all that's necessary to be obeyed, *all the Free-thinkers* should not more certainly know, what is so necessary to restrain men's Disobedience to God's Laws, and to incline men to keep them? But if the *Light of Nature* had not so plainly expressed this, which is the aptest means to inforce God's Laws, they may find he has revealed it *by his Word* so fully, as may affect and terrify a very Infidel. And the Obscurity of the *Light of Nature* in so important a Matter, ought to make *Divine*

Revelation acceptable to all, who mind their own Happineſs.

Qu. 6. But if he who *rejects the Goſpel*, ſhould find himſelf *deceived* in his Opinions and Actings, will not his being *pleaſantly deceived* ſoon appear to be indeed *the very worſt of his State?* For whereas a godly Fear and Concern had contributed to his Safety, his *pleaſant Dreams of Safety* in his irreligious Courſe harden him againſt Divine Warnings: His delightful *Expectation of all good things*, fixeth him in a blind Security, and emboldens him in his Infidelity, in his Scoffs at revealed Religion, and in neglects of the Duties thereby required. As ſuch Things expoſe him to the *ſorer Puniſhments* hereafter, ſo his *pleaſantneſs* in committing them maketh his State in this World next to deſperate, as to any hopes of his Recovery.

You ſay, *pag.* 40. *The infinite numbers of Pretenders in all Ages to Revelations from Heaven, ſupported by Miracles*, &c. *make* thinking *neceſſary*, &c.

Qu. 1. Must no holy Prophets and Apoſtles have received *true Revelations* from God, becauſe Deluders have *falſly* pretended to Revelations?

Qu. 2. When God had given *ſuch Revelations* of himſelf and his Will, as he declares to be *a ſufficient Rule*, is there the ſame Reaſon to queſtion the Truth of theſe;

these; as of *after-Revelations* pretending to make *a new Canon* for Faith, Worship, and the Terms of Salvation?

I AM glad to find among the *Errata* the following Clause, *viz.* dele, *If a Man be under an Obligation to listen to any Revelation at all.* If this Sentence had come into the Book, as the Author's deliberate Thought; I would ask, whether Man is *under any Obligation* to listen to the *Law of Nature?* For that's *a Revelation* of God's Will, as well as inspired Revelation: So it is, tho' Custom lead us to speak of the *Law of Nature*, as contradistinguished from *Revelation.* But this acknowledged *Erratum* (if honestly done) will give us ground to say, that you grant Man is *under an Obligation* to listen to *some Revelation* in some degree.

AGAIN, you tell us, *pag.* 44. *The Design of the* Gospel *was, to set all Men* upon Free-thinking, *&c. St.* Paul *offers many Arguments, for the Confirmation of Christians in the* true Faith; *whereby he made them, and all his Readers for ever,* Judges *of their Force; for whoever reasoneth, lays aside all Authority,* &c. *Our* Saviour *commands us to* search the Scriptures.

Qu. 1. BECAUSE *Free-thinking* is allow'd by the *Gospel,* to *find out* the Truth, and establish us in the Truth; may we therefore sceptically employ our *Free-think-*

ing, altogether to ſearch for pretences to *reject the Goſpel*, after we have received it upon Evidence?

Qu. 2. BECAUSE St. *Paul* ſometimes offers *Arguments* beſides his Authority, to confirm Men in the *true Faith*; has he made all his Readers for ever *Judges*, whether what he delivered from God as an *inſpired Apoſtle*, ſhall have *any Authority*, or ſerve as an Argument of any force, to determine their Judgment?

Qu. 3. BECAUSE *our Saviour* commands Men to *ſearch the Scriptures, which teſtified of him*; and forbids them blindly to reſign their Conſciences to the Dictates of any fallible Perſons; does it follow, that Chriſt forbids us to reſign our Judgment, to what God ſpeaks by infallible inſpired Perſons, and contained in the *Scriptures* as the *Rule of Faith*, as far as they are *rightly* explained? Had Chriſt favoured ſuch a Concluſion, the Command had contradicted his Purpoſe, which was to put them on *ſearching the Scriptures*, as containing *infallible Truths*.

YOU add, *pag.* 46. *The Conduct of the* Prieſts, *who are the chief Pretenders to be Guides to others in matters of Religion, makes* Free-thinking *unavoidable: And to prove this, I will give you an Induction of ſeveral Particulars of their Conduct.* And then from *pag.* 47, to *pag.* 76, *the Diviſions*

sions among *English Priests*, (as you call them,) about *the Nature and Attributes of God*, and the *Authority and Sense of Scriptures*, are mentioned.

HAVING still owned, that *Free-thinking* rightly managed is *lawful*, and a Duty, I shall suggest some Queries.

Qu. 1. ARE not more and greater *Divisions* among the *Heathen Free-thinkers* concerning God, and his Attributes? Yea, from them many Heresies came into the Christian Church.

Qu. 2. Is it not as just to reflect on the *Light of Nature*, or *Reason*, on account of such *Divisions* among the *Heathen Philosophers*, as to reflect on the *Scriptures*, because of these Divisions among Christian Ministers?

Qu. 3. YEA, would not such Reflections on the *Light of Nature* be more just? considering you tell us, that God speaks by that *so plainly*; whereas Christians own, that their Religion is in some Things *mysterious*.

Qu. 4. Is not your bold unlimited way of *Free-thinking*, the very *Cause* of the obnoxious Passages, which express the Sentiments of some of our *divided Priests*? For they had written and judged *with more Sobriety*, if their Minds had been restrained by the fear of God, and a due Veneration for his Word. But they *ran into Excesses* by indulging a profane Wit,

a vain Itch of Novelties, an irregular Fancy, and an Ambition to say something more than others.

Qu. 5. If *Priests* are generally *as bad Men* as you represent them, is it any wonder some of them give you such a handle for Triumph? But might you not with equal Justice, expose revealed Religion by what *Heathen* Enemies have written against it, as by what any such *Protestant* Priests utter; who appear as much *Atheists* and *Deists* as any others, and with whom the *Scriptures* are but *an idle Tale?*

Qu. 6. Is it impossible, yea or improbable, that *some Truths* improving of our Knowledge of God, and his Attributes, must have remained *Secrets* as to us, unless God had revealed them; and is not the Knowledge of such Truths an Advantage? You had been *more ignorant*, had there never been any Divine Revelation.

Qu. 7. May not *these Truths* when revealed, be committed to *writing*; and the Book containing them be called *the Scriptures of Truth?*

Qu. 8. Had Christians come to the Notice of such Truths by *unwritten Tradition*, would not their *Divisions* be much greater; when they are *so great* notwithstanding they enjoy the Scriptures?

Qu. 9. Must not these Scriptures have *a true certain fixed Sense*, though

Men

Men differ ever so much concerning that Sense? If it be not so, why do you assert *Free-thinking*, that you may *find out the meaning* of the Scriptures?

Qu. 10. MUST not this *proper Sense* and Meaning of the Scriptures, be *infallible Truth*, though many *wrest the Scriptures* to their own Destruction, and the Disturbance of others?

Qu. 11. IF some Men *think freely* about the meaning of the Scriptures, and yet *mistake* the true meaning of them, and fix on a false Sense; is not that a *false Opinion* and *Error?* If it be not so, all who *think freely* must be of one and the same *true Opinion*, though ever so contradictory to each other.

Qu. 12. IF the *Errors* which a Man falls into upon his *presumptuous Free-thinking*, be such as determine him to neglect or act contrary to *any Duty*, *essential* to happiness by the Divine Constitution; may not that be called *a damning Error?*

Qu. 13. IF some upon that *Free-thinking*, which becomes Men *sincerely* solicitous to know the Mind of God, and *devoutly* supplicating his Assistance in their searches into the Scriptures, do attain the *true Sense* of them as to *some Points*; may not they be assured, that they so far have arrived at the Knowledge of *infallible Truths*, notwithstanding the different Sentiments of others?

Qu. 14. ARE not *upright Chriſtians*, who believe that the *true Senſe* of the *Scriptures* is the *chief and proper Rule*, by which they are to judge, what they are to believe concerning God and his Will, eſpecially about the Salvation of Sinners; *in a more likely way* to adjuſt their different Sentiments, than by fixing on *natural Light* or *human Reaſon*, as the *chief Rule* or Judge of their Faith concerning God, and the Salvation of Sinners?—This appears ſo, becauſe the Senſe of Scripture is *ſo plain* as to many Truths, that the oppoſite Errors are confuted at firſt View; and wherein it appears *more doubtful*, yet when Arguments are drawn from *the Word*, as the *agreed Rule*, the extravagancies of the Mind are much reſtrained, and thoſe Arguments from the Divine Authority of that Rule are apt to convince, as far as the deduced Conſequences are gradually brought up to what is plainly expreſſed therein.

Qu. 15. CAN any who believe the *Scriptures* to be *divinely revealed*, admit that *natural Light* and *human Reaſon* are the *proper and chief Rule* and Judge, by which the Differences about all the great Doctrines of the Goſpel are to be decided?

SOME who acknowledge no higher a Rule than *natural Reaſon*, may profanely put an end to Diſſention about thoſe Truths, by condemning all of them as Trifles

Trifles and silly Fancies: But this Rule is *unfit* and *insufficient*, to adjust Debates of this kind to the Satisfaction of the Minds of real Christians; for they are convinced, that the Manifestations of God as the Saviour of Sinners by Christ, and his Will about their Salvation, transcend *human Reason*; and that it was not by the Light of Nature, that God revealed these Doctrines.

The Redemption of Sinners contains such *Miracles* of Wisdom, Mercy, and Power, as *human Reason* could not *invent*; nor could Reason not informed by Revelation, *infer them* from the Nature of God, or his Works, or from what he had written on the Hearts of Men. Nor yet are all of them, any of those *self-evident Truths*, which Reason without the help of Revelation can discern, and must approve at first View.

To set up *natural Reason* as the *chief Rule* by which all those Doctrines must be judged, seems to be an Affront to God; as if he had display'd his Perfections to the utmost in the Works of Nature, and had no more of his Will to make known, than he signified by the *Light of Nature*; to which also he must be confined, as the *only way* by which Himself or Mind must be revealed, however the Condition of Mankind is changed.

To infer the *falsehood* of any *revealed* Article

Article of Faith, becauſe it cannot be proved by *natural Reaſon*, is to ſubject a *Divine Teſtimony* to our human Underſtanding, which is not only fallible, but apt to miſtake through Ignorance of Matters above its proper Sphere. Moreover, to take *natural Reaſon* for the *chief Rule*, as to Matters of Goſpel Doctrines, is *inconſiſtent* with believing the *Scriptures* to be a Divine Revelation; becauſe theſe aſſert, that *they are the Rule* in thoſe Matters, and are ſufficient to be ſo. Yea, is it not a Contradiction? For as *a Faith* founded on *Human Reaſon*, (if it were Faith,) is *not a Divine Faith*; becauſe a *Divine* Faith is founded on God's Teſtimony contained in the Scriptures: When therefore I do believe any particular Truth, becauſe it is affirmed in the *Scriptures*, and yet appeal to *natural Reaſon* as the Rule by which I muſt judge whether it be true or falſe; is not this *believing the Scriptures*, and *not believing* them? Yea, is it not excluding *Faith*, and pleading for *Science* in the place of it?

Qu. 16. MAY not the *uſefulneſs of human Reaſon*, and its *concern* as to the Chriſtian Religion *be great*, though it be not admitted to be the *chief Rule*, but *ſubjected to the Scriptures*, wherein any Rivalſhip is pretended?

THE Caſes wherein *Rivalſhip* may be pretended, are ſuch as theſe: (1.) If a revealed *Doctrine of Faith* is plainly contain-

ed

ed and affirmed in the Scripture as *a certain Truth*, and the meaning of it be fully agreed; and yet a Dispute arise, whether *that Doctrine* be *true* or *false*; if my *Reason* cannot reconcile it with Truth, shall I believe that Doctrine to be *true*, because I know the *Scripture* affirms it to be a true Doctrine? or shall I reject it as *false*, because my *Reason* cannot reconcile it with Truth? (2.) If the Dispute be about *the meaning* of a revealed Precept or Doctrine, acknowledged to be in the Scriptures; must I search the *Scriptures*, and compare them, and conclude *that to be the meaning*, which is truly collected from the Scriptures so compared? or must I conclude *against that meaning*, and prefer such *other Sense* as I collect not from any part of Scripture, but altogether from other Topics?—In such Cases, ought I to *suspect my Reason* to be defective, and *subject my Understanding* to the *Scripture?* Or from an Opinion of the *Infallibility* of my use of *Reason*, condemn the *Scriptures* as false and imperfect?

But though a Christian yields the preference to *Scripture* in such Cases, the *usefulness* and *concern* of *Reason* are great in the Christian Religion.

Reason admits as a most self-evident Truth, that men are to *obey* whatever God commands, and to *believe* what he revealeth. It also condemns Idolatry, many Vices,

Vices, and many falſe Opinions, all which oppoſe men's receiving the Chriſtian Religion. It alſo approves of thoſe *Precepts* of the *Law of Nature*, which the Scripture more fully explaineth; and of many Doctrines diſcoverable by its Light, which the Word reveals more perfectly: Yea, *Reaſon* has ſuggeſted to moſt Men, the *neceſſity* of ſome Divine Revelation, from the defect and uncertainty of *natural Light*, in what concerned the Worſhip of God, Expiation of Sin, *&c.* By ſuch Things, and Inferences rationally deduced from them, the Minds of men are *prepared* to receive the Chriſtian Religion, when propoſed to them.

REASON with the Aſſiſtance which God affords to upright Enquirers, is alſo capable of judging of the *Evidence* of Revelation; and thereby to conclude, whether it be *Divine* or not. And as it requireth us to be diligent and impartial in the Enquiry, leſt we be deceived by Impoſture; ſo *true Reaſon* will incline us to acquieſce in *ſuch Evidence* as is proper and ſufficient.

WHEN we are rationally convinced, that the Revelation is of God, we muſt labour by Study, Meditation, and Prayer, to underſtand the revealed Truths, and to aſſent and approve of them, by bringing *every Imagination into Subjection to Chriſt.* The Faculty of *Reaſon* being *enlightned* by the revealed

revealed Truths, is to be exercised in *comparing* Scripture with Scripture for further Knowledge, and in making just Inferences by the Light of the Word, and in representing Truths with all proper, and especially Gospel Motives, to the Will, in order to its consent for practical Obedience; and in *comparing* our Temper and Practice with the Gospel and the Law of Nature, and in approving or condemning the same, according to their Conformity *both* to the Law of Christ, and the Law of Nature. In doing thus, we *shew our selves Men* and Christians too; and as wherein even our own Inferences from the *Law of Nature* seem to differ from the *Explications* of that Law in the Word, we must prefer those Explications as *more certain* than our own Reasonings from Nature; so we must *examine* those Explications with an Assurance of Mind, that God will *command* nothing by his revealed Word, which is *against* true Reason, or the Law of Nature *rightly* understood, though many Gospel Doctrines may be *against* what Infidels imagine by a Mistake of the Light of Nature to be their truest Reason. *Reason* is also of great Importance to *defend* the Christian Religion against the Attempts of Deluders: This can detect all false Conclusions illated from Scripture Premises, and prove all such Truths, which have their Foundation in the Light of Nature,

(either

(either in whole, or in part,) by its own *connate* or *acquired Principles*, as proper Mediums.

As to the large Catalogue of the Inſtances you give, wherein our *Proteſtant Prieſts* are *divided*, I ſhall leave it to be conſidered by others; who will eaſily find, that in moſt of what you quote from ſeveral of the Authors, their Senſe is perverted by your concealing the true Occaſion of their Expreſſions.

I SHALL conſider only what you mention concerning the *Eternity* of *Hell-Torments*. You tell us, *pag.* 68. *Our Prieſts diſpute whether* Hell-Torments *are* eternal; *ſome of the moſt eminent either doubt of their* Eternity, *or deny them to be eternal.* Among theſe you name Dr. *More*, and the excellent Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*.

Qu. 1. SUPPOSING (but not granting,) that αιων and αιωνιος, and God's *Comminations*, (as Dr. *More* thinks,) would not prove the *Eternity* of *Hell-Torments*, are not many other Arguments to be produced from Scripture, which are ſufficient to convince us, that thoſe *Torments* will be *eternal?* And the eminent Perſons you inſtance, being *Chriſtians* who had the Grace to believe the Word of God, it will not be improper to make uſe of *Scripture Arguments* in determining this Point.

Qu. 2.

Qu. 2. NOT to mention other Arguments, will not a careful comparing of *Mat.* xxv. 31, 32, 41, 46. with 1 *Cor.* xv. 23, 24, 25, *&c.* prove, that *Hell-Torments* are *eternal?* For St. *Matthew*, and St. *Paul*, speak of the same Time, *viz.* the Day of Judgment. In St. *Matthew*, Christ pronounceth this Sentence in that Day on the wicked, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels:* And he saith of them, *These shall go into everlasting Punishment*; a Punishment, *reserved* and respited to that Time. St. *Paul* saith, *They who are Christ's,* shall be made alive *at his coming*; and *then cometh the End, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father*; *when he shall have put down all Rule, and all Authority, and Power*; *for he must reign, till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet.* Now, Jude, *ver.* 13, 15.

Qu. 3. Is it not evident, that when Christ *delivers up his Kingdom* to the Father, he *leaves* the wicked under this Sentence, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; and the Execution of that Sentence but *just begun?*

Qu. 4. MUST it not follow, that *Hell-Torments* must be *eternal*, unless the *Damned* obtain *a Release* from those Torments, *after* that Christ has *delivered up the Kingdom* to the Father?

Qu. 5.

Qu. 5. WILL it be difficult to conclude, that the *Damned* ſhall not obtain *a Releaſe* from their Torments, *after* Chriſt has *delivered up the Kingdom* to the Father, if we conſider *what Kingdom* it is, and *how* delivered up? The *Kingdom* which Chriſt delivers up, in his *mediatorial Kingdom*; by which he applied the Fruits of his Death by mediatory Acts, and having *all Power* given him *as Mediator*, he exerciſed it till he had effectually attained the deſigned Ends of his Office; and this he did ſo perfectly, that *the Godhead*, as in Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, *becomes all in all*; as communicating Favours to the Saints, admitting Worſhip, and exerciſing Dominion, *immediately*, without the interpoſal of a Mediator, as *ver.* 28. The *Kingdom* and *Prieſthood* of Chriſt, are ſaid to be *for ever*, as to their being *perfect* in themſelves; *eternal* in the Bleſſedneſs of the Saved, as their Effect; and *ſucceeded by no other* Prieſthood, or mediatorial Kingdom; yet theſe will then be *at a Period*, as to mediating Acts: Our Lord Jeſus *converts* no more men by his Power; he *ſaves* no more Sinners by his Merits; the *Truſt* committed to him, he *delivers up* as fully diſcharged; and the *vicarious Power*, as ſucceſsfully employed to *all the Purpoſes* for which it was delegated to him.

Qu. 6. THE *delivering up* of the Kingdom of Chriſt being of this Nature, are there

there not many Reasons which will make it certain, that the Damned *cannot be released* from their Torments? and consequently, that *Hell-Torments* will be *eternal?* For instance,

(1.) WILL it not be greatly to the *Dishonour* of Christ, and contrary to the *Gospel of God, and of Christ*, that the *Damned* be *released?* For they will *not be released* for the sake of the Merits of Christ; seeing they cannot be applied to any *new Subject*, after his Kingdom is *delivered up*. The *Sentence* of Christ must be also *reversed*; though it was according to the Sanction of the *Gospel*, which *condemned* the impenitent Unbeliever. Our Lord declares, that those must be *slain before him*, who *would not submit that he*, as Mediator, *should reign over them*; but when he has *delivered up* his mediatorial *Kingdom*, they cannot admit *this man*, as Mediator, *to reign over them*. By the Gospel, whoever *comes to God*, must *come by Christ*; but if the *Damned* come to God, it is *not by Christ*. We read, that *Christ will be glorified and admired in all those*, whom he *does not punish with everlasting Destruction from his Presence*; but he will *not be glorified* in those, who *obey not the Gospel*, as the way of their recovery. Can the *Damned* be *released*, when the Gospel, as the *Rule of Judgment*, is past into a *Sentence* against them; and this to be under an Administration,

2 Thess. i. 8, 9.

John xii. 48. Mark xvi. 16.

Luke xix. 14, 27.

John xiv. 6.

2 Thess. i. 9, 10.

ſtration, which the Mediator has no concern in? *Angels* are *curſed*, if they *preach another Goſpel.* In the following Heads we ſhall ſee more of this kind.

Gal. i. 8.

(2.) Is it not very inconſiſtent with *God the Father*, to releaſe the Damned, when the Mediator has *delivered up* the Kingdom? *He committed all Judgment to the Son*; and will he become *a Judge* in oppoſition to Chriſt, to favour his Enemies, and diſſolve his Sentence?—Has God thought it not becoming his Holineſs and Majeſty to *tranſact about Peace* with Sinners here on Earth, except it were *by Chriſt* as *Mediator*, nor to ſave them from the Wrath to come without *his Satisfaction*? And will he *make Peace* with Rebels in Hell *without the Mediator*, and free them from Wrath, without regard to *that Satisfaction*, as if the work of Redemption were a needleſs contemptible Matter? Or is there *another Mediator* of more Dignity than his Son Chriſt Jeſus?— God is for ever *holy and juſt*; and muſt not he *abhor the Damned*, if they retain their Malignity, and *continue the Puniſhment* Chriſt bound upon them, if they remain wicked?—Or if you ſhould ſuppoſe them to be releaſed as *Converts*, how ſhall they become ſo? It's not by the *Word* of Chriſt, nor by the *Spirit* of Chriſt, nor by *Grace* derived from *his Fulneſs*.—The *Papiſts* have a better Plea for their *Purgatory*, than

John v. 22, 27.

1 Tim. ii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 19. Heb. ix. 22.

Hab. i. 13.

than can be found for admitting the Damned to a *new State of Probation* proper for Hell; and this, after *Judgment is passed* upon them, (which is *the Judgment of God*, as well as of Christ;) after *the Books*, and *the Door*, are *shut*; yea, after that solemn Declaration, *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still:* Their *Worm that never dieth* will aggravate their woe; and their *gnashing of Teeth* for pain and rage, shew rather that a desperate Malignity will *grow*, than that Contrition from the Love of God, and Holiness shall *begin*, especially in *Outlaws*, who are in Hell incapable of meriting.

Rom. ii. 5. Mat. xxv. 10. Rev. xxii. 11. Mark ix. 44.

(3.) ARE the *Damned* (if they could be *released*,) capable of entring into *Heaven?* Christ Jesus *hath the Keys of Hell*; and will he let out his condemned Enemies? Heaven is *his Kingdom*; and will he receive into it such as are none of his Subjects, no Members of his Body, nor Parts of his Church, nor *written in the Lamb's Book of Life?* Shall they possess that Glory, to whom he declared, *I know you not; depart from me, ye workers of Iniquity?* He is *the way* to Heaven, and has declared, *there is no other Name under Heaven* by which men *must be saved*; and can they be *saved*, who come not to Heaven *by him*, nor who owe any thing to *that Name?* Are these things consistent with

Rev. i. 18. Eph. v. 5. Rev. xxi. 27. Mat. vii. 23. Acts iv. 12.

God's declared Will, or with his Oath; who *hath ſworn*, the Unbeliever *ſhall never enter into his Reſt?*

Heb iii. 11, 18.

(4.) If the *Damned* ſhall be *releaſed* after Chriſt has *delivered up the Kingdom*, will it not be againſt God's own *eternally decreed Method* which he has fixed, as well as againſt the Goſpel-Conſtitution? God is expreſsly ſaid to have *predeſtinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good Pleaſure of his Will:* And of ſuch as are ſaved, we read, they are *elect according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience, and Sprinkling of the Blood of Jeſus.* But if the *Damned* are to be adopted, it's *not by Jeſus Chriſt* that God adopts them to himſelf, nor *by the Sprinkling of his Blood* that they are ſaved.

Eph. i. 5.

1 Pet. i. 2.

These things will make it evident to ſuch as *believe the Scriptures*, that they whom Chriſt Jeſus puts under *deſtructive Puniſhments* (or condemns to be *caſt into Hell)* at the laſt Judgment, can no more be *releaſed* after he has *delivered up the mediatorial Kingdom*, than that it's poſſible, that God will rob his Son of the Glory of his being *the only Mediator* and Saviour of Sinners, will reverſe his *Sentence* as unjuſt, will brand his *Mediation* as inſufficient, will proclaim the *Work of Redemption* as vain, will contradict *his own* Goſpel-Conſtitution

stitution as weak and false; will expose the solemn Proceedings of the *last Judgment* as ludicrous; will erect *a new Kingdom of Grace*, at the Head of which Christ is not to be; will grant *another State of Probation* in Hell, for such as were condemned for wilfully neglecting that on Earth; will create *a new Kingdom* for such as cannot enter into Christ's Kingdom of Glory; and will reverse *his own Eternal Decree*, whereby he fixed the method of the Salvation of Sinners; whether that Decree be considered as conditional, or as absolute. *No better hope* can the *Damned* have, to escape out of *that Fire*, which is *unquenchable.*

I SHALL conclude this Matter with this Query.

Qu. Do not they who at all *believe a Hell*, run a bold and desperate Risque, if they flatter themselves in an irreligious Course, with the Expectation that *the Torments of Hell* are *not Eternal?*

WHAT if the *Light of Nature* do no more than evidence, that there's *a future State of Retribution*, wherein the Wicked shall be punished *in proportion* to their Crimes, without determining the Term of *Duration:* Yet what Stupidity is he under, who reads the *Scripture*, and *believes not* the Account that gives of those Punishments, unless he can infallibly prove it to be *an Imposture*? Or does he who *be-*

lieveth the written Account, consult *his own Safety*, if he expect *a Period to Hell-Torments*; unless the Scripture gives him more express and plain Evidence for *such a Period*, than is produced for *the Eternity* of those Torments?

SUPPOSE that αιωνιος, or *Everlasting*, sometimes signifies *a long Time*, and not *Eternal*: Yet when Christ expresseth the *Reward* of the *Saints* by this word, intending it to be expressive of the *Eternity* of those Rewards; would he in his *Sentence on the Wicked*, make use of the *same word* at the *same Time*, with an intent to express the *Torments of the Damned* to be but *Temporary?* Would not he have mentioned a definite Time, and not have hardned them against Repentance by a word, that must induce them to *despair* of a Release?—And if *Eternal Torments* are (as some without Reason imagine,) *inconsistent with the Divine Perfections*, would he use a word that might be interpreted to reflect on those Perfections? For *this word* does generally express what is *Eternal*, and is fit to do so; and there's no apter word to signify what is perpetual.—Or can we doubt, if God has affirmed *Hell-Torments* to be *Eternal*, that they are certainly *consistent with all his Perfections*, and will in his Time be convincingly declared to be so, although we could not *at present* fully reconcile them therewith?

Mat. xxv. 41, 46.

But

But Believers will *now* say, *We are sure, that the Judgment of God is according to Truth, who will render to every Man according to his Deeds*; and, *Righteous art thou, O Lord.* Rom. ii. 2, 6. Jer. xii. 1.

WILL it be any relief, that *Annihilation* is hoped, because the Punishments of the Damned are expressed by such words as *Death*, *Perish*, *Destruction?* Whereas, those Terms express their Punishments from the *first Moment* they begin; they are fit, and are made use of, to express the *high degrees* of their Misery: and are joined with *other terms*, that signify the Persons who suffer *are alive*, and *sensible* of their Punishments; such as, being *delivered to the Tormentors, weeping and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth, Tribulation and Anguish*, &c. Finally, *the long-suffering of the Lord, and willingness that all should come to Repentance*, was so great, that men walked the more *after their Lusts* from a Conceit, that he was *slack concerning the Promise of his coming*; so that a *longer delay*, or forbearance of such Sinners, had done them no good, but hurt. Mat. xviii. 34. xiii. 42. Rom. ii. 9. 2 Pet. iii. 3, 9.

HAVING commended *Epicurus*, *pag.* 129. as *eminent for that most Divine of all Virtues, and wherein the greatest Pleasure of human Life consists, and of which an ill man is incapable*, viz. *Friendship*; you say, *pag.* 130. *We Christians ought still to have*

a higher Veneration of Epicurus *for this Virtue of* Friendſhip, *than* Cicero; *becauſe even* our holy Religion itſelf *does not any where* particularly *require of us ſuch a high degree of Virtue.*

Qu. 1. Is Friendſhip among men *the moſt Divine of all Virtues?* Not to mention other Virtues, is not a ſincere *Love to God* a Virtue? and is not he *a more excellent* Object of Love, and deſerving of greater Love than is to be allowed to any Creature? Yea, to love any Man *equally* with God, ſhews that injurious Contempt of God, as may juſtly be termed *a hating of him.* But it ſeems, as *Epicurus* makes God *regardleſs of human Affairs*, ſo it's no wonder, they who have this Veneration for that Man, ſhould aſſert that *a Friend* is more worthy of *our higheſt Love*, than God himſelf, whom he makes ſo uſeleſs to men.

Qu. 2. Are you well acquainted with the *Delights* of a watchful *Chriſtian*, when you think *Friendſhip* is *the greateſt Pleaſure* of Human Life? For he accounts, that Communion with God, a Senſe of his Favour, inward Peace, and the Hopes of Eternal Glory, *much more* contribute to the Pleaſure of his Life.

Qu. 3. Is a *profane* man an *ill man?* Or are *Idolaters* ill men? Yet theſe are *not incapable of Friendſhip* in your Eſteem. Who *more profane*, than *Epicurus* and his Followers?

Followers? And the celebrated *Instances* commonly given *of Friendship*, are among idolatrous *Pagans*.

Qu. 4. ARE you serious, when you call that *our holy Religion*, and yet tell us, it is so defective in its Rules, as no *where particularly to require* that *high degree of Virtue*, and that for instructing us therein, *Epicurus* deserves *our Veneration?* Lawful Friendship *our Religion* appoints; but that's so small a part of it, that it would not deserve the Name of a *holy Religion*, if it required not *higher degrees of Virtue*, and other Instances of *Piety*.

Qu. 5. CAN any *lawful Friendship* pretend to *a higher degree* of Love to Men, than what Christianity *particularly requires?* And is it not *a higher degree of Virtue*, to exercise *this Love* to the various Objects described by the Laws of Christ, than in that contracted Manner as what you call *Friendship* allows?

OUR Lord Jesus tells us, that *to love our Neighbours as our selves*, is our great Duty, next after our Love to God: Yea, *all the Law* is said to be *fulfilled in this*: And *the end of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart, and of a good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned.* Wherefore *as we have Opportunity, let us do good to all men*; which Love to *all men* is upon the account of their having *the Image of God* as Men. Our blessed Jesus commandeth

Mat. xxii. 39. Gal. v. 14. 1 Tim. i. 5. Gal. vi. 10.

Mat. v. 44, 45. manded us, *Love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you; that you may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven:* And by St. Rom. xii. 20. *Paul*, he requires, *If thine Enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirſt, give him drink.* But with regard to ſuch as are partakers of the ſame Grace,

WHAT *greater Inſtances* of *Friendſhip* can be juſtly given, that exceed what the *Goſpel* enjoins on the Followers of Chriſt Gal. v. 13. to one another? *By Love ſerve one ano-* 1 Pet. i. 22. *ther*; and *ſee, that you love another with* Mat. xxv. 35, *& ſeq.* *a pure heart fervently.* We muſt *feed, clothe, viſit them when ſick or in priſon*; Acts iv. 34. and *ſell our Eſtates*, if they cannot otherwiſe ſubſiſt, as the firſt Chriſtians did. We ought to *have fellowſhip with them*, Gal. vi. 2. and to *bear their Burdens*; to *be kind one* Eph. iv. 32 *to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one* Rom. xii. 10, 15. *another*; to *weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice*; and to *be kindly affectioned one towards another, with brotherly love, in honour preferring one* 1 John iii. 16. *another.* We ought to *lay down our lives for the Brethren*; to *confeſs our faults one* James v. 16. *to another*; and *if a man be overtaken in a* Gal. vi. 1. *fault*, to *reſtore ſuch an one in the Spirit of meekneſs.*

ARE not *theſe Rules* fit to direct us to the *height of Friendſhip*, as far as it is a Virtue? Is it a Fault in *Chriſtianity*, that it preſcribes ſuch kind Treatment towards

our

our Enemies, and to *all Men?* or that it calls for such *high Instances* of *Friendship* with all, who have the holy Image of *Christ* upon them? Sure it's the Honour of our Religion, to enjoin what argues us to be so like to God, and such Lovers of him: For the *Christian Love* is of a Divine Original, and founded on Divine Considerations.

In our Religion we have also the *strongest Motives* to induce us to *Love*. The Necessity of it is so asserted, that *nothing can profit without it*: All things that *obstruct* it, are forbidden; and whatever formeth the Heart in the best disposition towards it, is enjoined. Upon such Evidence, none can instance *a defect* in our Religion, as to *true Love to men*, unless they were so bent to quarrel with *Christianity*, as to condemn it for that, which is fit to recommend it, as the greatest Blessing to mankind at present. Happy World, happy Church, if this *Christian Virtue* prevailed! Then neither Revenge, Malice, Self-seeking, Envy, Pride, nor Rage, (all which it forbids,) would hinder the common Benefit of all Men; the most holy, wise, and useful, would be most esteemed; and a safe Foundation laid, that all other good Qualities and Offices might contribute to that delightful Satisfaction and Confidence, which flow from that *more special Friendship*, as results from a greater Harmony

1 Cor. xiii. 2.

Harmony of Tempers between ſome than others.

I SHALL take no notice of any of your mentioned *Free-thinkers*, except the *inſpired Writers* of the Scripture, who are cited from *pag.* 150, to *pag.* 157.

Qu. 1. WHEN you cite words from them as *Free-thinkers*, do you conſider, that what they wrote was by *Inſpiration*, and not from *their own* Suggeſtion, or private Thoughts? For *the Prophecy came not in old time by the Will of Man; but holy Men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.* It was the property of falſe Prophets, to *ſpeak Viſions out of their own Heart, and not out of the Mouth of the Lord.*

2 Pet. i. 21.

Jer. xxiii. 16.

Qu. 2. CAN any juſtly infer, that the *Eternity of the World* was *Solomon*'s Judgment, from thoſe words; *One Generation paſſeth away, and another cometh, but the Earth abideth for ever?* Can this import, that the *Earth* had *no beginning*, becauſe it endureth longer than the ſucceſſive Generations that dwelt on it? and perhaps, it may always continue, after it is purified. But *Solomon* aſſures you, the Earth had a beginning; where *Wiſdom* ſays, *I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the Earth was; —while as yet he had not made the Earth, nor the higheſt part of the*

Eccl. i. 4.

Prov. viii. 23,—26.

the Dust of the World; which may signify *the first Matter.*

Qu. 3. HAVE you better Reason to accuse *Solomon*, as one who denied *the Immortality of the Soul*, or argued against *a future State? pag.* 152. You produce *Eccl.* iii. 21. *Who knoweth the Spirit of Man that goeth upward?* And neither the Original, nor Context, can admit your reading, *viz. Who knoweth that the Spirit of a Man goeth upward?* But will you allow *Solomon*'s Vindication of himself in this very Book? *Eccl.* xii. 7. *Then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return to God who gave it:* And at the Close of it, *ver.* 13, 14. *Let us hear the Conclusion of the whole Matter, Fear God and keep his Commandments; for God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Any who read this xii*th Chapter*, must wonder you could represent *so wise a Man* as *denying so important a Truth*, or *a future State*: *(pag.* 152.*)* It is easy to prove, that these Truths were also known to the *Saints* under the *Old Testament*, and generally received as what influenced their Patience and Obedience.

Qu. 4. Is it the same thing for God, not to accept but *reject* the external Worship of a profane People, who from their hypocritical Observance of that, encouraged

raged themſelves to *live wickedly*, as it would be to *deny that he had ever inſtituted* that external Worſhip it ſelf? You object, *Jer.* vii. 22. *I ſpake not to your Fathers, nor commanded them in the Day that I brought them out of the Land of* Egypt, *concerning Burnt-offerings, or Sacrifices.* But if you read the next Verſe, you will find it explain'd; for he ſaith, *ver.* 23. *But this thing commanded I them, ſaying, Obey my Voice, and I will be your God, and you ſhall be my People; and walk ye in all my Ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you: But they hearkened not,* &c. The plain Senſe is this: "I did not command "*Burnt-offerings*, as what would *excuſe* "your Obedience to any of my *other* "Commandments which you neglect; "nor were *they alone*, no, nor were they "*the principal Condition* of my being your "God, and your being my People, or of "its being well with you: But *the Con-*"*dition* was, that you ſhould *obey my* "*Voice* by walking *in all my Ways*, as "well as in offering theſe *Sacrifices.*" But to infer hence, *pag.* 154. *That the Prophets wrote, as if they believed the Religion of the* Jews *was not the Inſtitution of God, but an Impoſture*, is to charge God with a bad Memory, and Self-contradiction.

Nor can either the *Holineſs* of God, or the *Divine Inſtitution of the* Jewiſh *Religion*,

ligion, be accused, from *Ezek.* xx. 25. where he saith, *Wherefore I gave them also Statutes that were not good, and Judgments whereby they should not live.* These Statutes cannot intend what concerned their Religion, except as they turned them into *an occasion* of Evil, or as *opposed* to the Gospel-Dispensation: For he saith, *ver.* 21. *The Children rebelled against me, they walked not in my Statutes, neither kept my Judgments to do them; which if a Man do, he shall even live.* They must respect therefore a penal *Permission* of such *idolatrous* or *civil Statutes*, which their Heathen Enemies brought them under, as a just Punishment for rejecting the *good Statutes* the Holy God had given them.

Qu. 5. When, *pag.* 155, 156. you cite the *true Prophets* declaring God's Rebukes and Threatnings against the *wicked Priests*, and *false Prophets*, does what they say stigmatize *good Priests*, or *true Prophets*, or imply there can be *none* such? Were not several *Priests* and *Prophets* approved of God as *good* men, and as most eminently such? But moreover, does God *nullify the Offices* of true Prophets or Priests, by any of those Reproofs? We find, the *Offices* remained; the *Aaronical Priesthood* continued, till Christ put a Period to it by acting as *a Priest of the Order of Melchisedeck*; and the *Prophetick Office* continued long in the Christian Church. Or does

does God, in any of the cited Texts, in the leaſt *condemn the Office* of either Prieſts or Prophets? No; inſtead of that, his ſevere Reproofs and Threatnings againſt theſe wicked Men, imply the great Account he made of *both the Offices* which they profanely managed: For the Indignation of God was excited againſt them, becauſe Men in ſo *ſacred* an Office as the *Prieſthood* ſhould be ſo *wicked*; and that *vile* Perſons ſhould pretend to ſo *divine* an Office as the *Prophetick*. The *Dignity* of theſe Offices aggravated their Sins, and expoſed them to ſorer Puniſhments. If your deſign in theſe Inſtances be to condemn *all the Miniſters* of the Goſpel, becauſe *ſome* of them are wicked; will not it follow, that *all Free-thinkers* muſt be Libertines, becauſe *ſome* are ſo? Or if you would infer, that the *Office of the Miniſtry* is to be rejected, becauſe bad Men pervert it to ill Purpoſes; is it not as rational to condemn *Free-thinking*, becauſe this is abuſed by too great a Number to the worſt Purpoſes?

I DO not hereby inſinuate, that *Free-thinking* is not both *lawful* and a *Duty*, when it's juſtly limited and directed to a proper and good End. Whether it has been thus managed in your preſent Performance, I leave to the Judgment of the Chriſtian Reader, and the Reflections

of

of your own awakened Conſcience. In the mean time, you have Reaſon to ſuſpect, that many well-meaning People will not be ſo much convinced by your ſtrongeſt Reaſons for *Free-thinking*, as they will be prejudiced againſt it, when they find you repreſent it as no other thing, than a raking only for ſuch Stuff, as will moſt expoſe Revealed Religion, and a Goſpel-Miniſtry.

SOME

QUERIES

Relating to the

BILL

For preventing the

GROWTH of SCHISM.

Printed in the Year 1714.

SOME

QUERIES, &c.

Qu. I.
WILL it not bring a severe *Persecution* upon Dissenters, though eased and protected by a *Legal Toleration*, oft confirmed by Assurances from the *Throne*; and thereby encouraged to lay out their Money in the Publick Funds, *South-Sea Stock*, &c?

For will it not prove a *Persecution* against Dissenters, when they shall be excluded from several more Privileges than by former Laws? such as, *Teaching to read*, &c.

More of their Number are restrained from a *Subsistence*; as the *Women*, who have a Livelihood by Teaching to read: And further *Qualifications* are imposed on the Men, *viz.* Receiving the *Sacrament* after the manner of the *Church of England*.

The *Penalties* are also greater than by former Laws, if they keep any School. A-

mong the reſt, if they go at any time to any of our *Meetings*, they are *for ever* incapacitated to teach; yea, though qualified according to the Bill.

THE *Proceſs* againſt them if they offend, is more dangerous, and leſs agreeable to the former Liberties of *Engliſhmen*.

THAT general Clauſe in it [*any other Literature*] will give a handle to *Apparitors* and others to diſturb, if not a foundation for convicting and puniſhing many, for following their Trades and Callings. Nor can the Reſtraint otherwiſe *prevent Schiſm*, than as it ruineth vaſt numbers of Men, who are uſeful and neceſſary to the Nation's Benefit and Safety: For *Literature* is not a Word determined by our Laws. Who knows then, but Attorneys, Apothecaries, Maſters of Ships, *&c.* may be proſecuted for teaching their reſpective Arts to their Apprentices? as alſo, ſuch as teach Anatomy, Surveying, Arithmetick; yea, Writing-Maſters, (though the word *Writing* ſhould be expunged;) for *Letters* and *Learning* are concerned in each of theſe?

Qu. II. WILL it not bring *Diſhonour* upon the *Church of England?* ſeeing that it's very inconſiſtent with the Preamble to the *Occaſional Bill*, wherein ſhe is declared to be againſt Perſecution. This alſo promotes *Ignorance*. And will it not ſeem, that

that she puts *Her Majesty* upon doing that, whence some will rashly think her forgetful of her many Gracious Promises, to *protect* the Dissenters, and keep the *Toleration inviolable?* as also to invite her to permit *Severities* against *her own Subjects*, when her Majesty with Zeal contends for the Rights of *such Protestants* abroad?

AGAIN, Will it not proclaim the *Weakness* of the Church, as if the *Occasional Act*, so lately added to many other Laws and Advantages, were insufficient for her Support, whilst poor *Old Women* teach Children their A B C in *English* or *French?* Yea, will it be the Glory of the Church, to *differ from all Nations*; for none to whom a Liberty for Worship was granted, were hindered to *educate their Children?* Or will it be her Glory, to imitate the *French King*, who began the Extirpation of the *Protestants* by prohibiting *their Schools*; and to out-do *Julian the Apostate*, who declared it *unnatural* to cramp the Education of *Children?* As to the lessening her Repute among *Foreign Reformed Churches*, it's not worth the naming to some Persons.

Qu. III. Is it not against the *Interest* of the Church?

ALL who are true Members of it as a *Church of Christ*, will esteem themselves to suffer by the *Errors* and other things de-

trimental to *Religion*, which will hardly be avoided, when the *Diſſenting Teachers* become *illiterate*, for want of Education at home. But if their Youth are *ſent abroad*, they will (beſides the Money there expended) probably receive Principles leſs moderate, and have more Learning to defend them, than can be expected in the *few* and *ſmall Academies* of Diſſenters in this Land.

Qu. IV. May not this Bill iſſue in *the Growth of Schiſm*, (as they call it?)

For ſober *Engliſhmen* abhor *Severities*, and pity the Perſecuted; eſpecially when under foot, and not wilfully Criminals. But they envy the Domineering, and ſuſpect that Cauſe to be *Antichriſtian*, which inflames the Perſecutors, and can't ſubſiſt by leſs inhuman means than Violence; eſpecially if they ſeem too potent already, or leſs circumſpect in their Behaviour.

Qu. V. Are thoſe of the Church who reſolve to *oppoſe Popery*, ſure thoſe Times will never *return*, when a *Popiſh Prince* may attempt to *ruin the Church*, as poſſeſſed of Power, with all publick Emoluments; and in order thereto, tempt the *Diſſenters* (by removing their Yoke) to ſtand Neuters? Or can they expect, that *new Promiſes* to theſe, will ſo eaſily obtain their

their Aſſiſtance as formerly, when they are now again perſecuting them, after ſuch a plain Breach of repeated ſolemn Promiſes in the like Extremities?

Qu. VI. In *preſent Circumſtances* at home and abroad, and when the moſt important Matters are depending, and Trade ſo reduced; have not the *Popiſh Party* the juſteſt Reaſon to *rejoice in*, and expect Advantage from *this Bill*, as it divides, irritates, and weakens any true Proteſtants; eſpecially ſuch, as they think more remote from and zealous againſt them, than ſome others be? Nor ought it to be forgotten, that a *Houſe of Commons*, (who, had they obtained the *Bill of Excluſion*, had ſaved us much Blood, Treaſure, Honour, and Quiet,) and ſeveral *Biſhops* ſince that time, have publiſhed, That the *Diſſenters were perſecuted* by the Inſtigation of *Papiſts*, and to ſerve their Intereſts.

Qu. VII. Are all Men in this blinded Age wiſe enough to comprehend the *utmoſt* Views and Tendencies of this Bill? Is it only to diſtreſs the *Non-Conformiſts?* No: For tho' more Hurt may be intended againſt them, if there be time enough for a gradual Progreſs; yet *they* being low Game, and having few left of greater figure than Tradeſmen, may it not in time conduce to ſubject the *Common* and *Statute* Laws

Laws to the *Canon Law?* Will it not begin to raiſe the *Biſhops Courts* to a Power unbefitting our Proteſtant, and inconſiſtent with our Limited Government?

It is true, the *Church of England*, whilſt managed by real Proteſtants, can't be fatal to the Nation: Yet all her prudent and faithful Leaders know, the *Romiſh Church*, upon her *growing* Corruptions, proceeded gradually to determine the *Succeſſion of Princes* at her Will, oft excluding ſuch who had the *Legal Eſtabliſhment*. But whether ſhe condeſcended to admit their Title, or advanced a *Competitor* againſt Law, both muſt be made either mere impotent *Cyphers*, or formidable *Tools* to execute her ambitious Deſigns; as impowered to *tyrannize* over the People by a *Standing Army* of Slaves or Foreigners, with *her Aſſiſtance*. Nor was ſhe diſappointed, till the deluded *Laiety*, by the Smart of cruel Oppreſſions, were forced to *ſee with their own Eyes*; and from that dear-bought Conviction, to recover thoſe juſt Rights they had *ſottiſhly reſigned* to the *worſt Uſurpers*, under the ſacred Pretenſions of *Mother-Church*.

F I N I S.

A FUNERAL

SERMON

Occasioned by

The much Lamented DEATH

Of the late REVEREND

Daniel Williams, D. D.

WHO

Deceased *January* the 26th, 1715-16.

In the 73d Year of his Age.

By JOHN EVANS.

Printed in the Year 1716.

TO

Mrs. JANE WILLIAMS,

Relict of the REVEREND

Dr. WILLIAMS.

MADAM,

YOU have here offered to your Eye, ſince your Circumſtances allowed you not to hear it, the Diſcourſe preached at your Deſire upon Occaſion of the Great and General Loſs we have ſuſtained. I tenderly ſympathize with You in the Part You bear; and hope our compaſſionate High-Prieſt in Heaven does ſo too, in a much more beneficial Manner than any of Your Friends on Earth can do.

THE

THE Sovereign Diſpoſer of all Things has been pleaſed to give You ſenſible Experience, in this dying World, of the Vanity of earthly Comforts, by the Removal of many deſirable Relations. Beſides your firſt *pious* Conſort, (*whoſe Memory is precious to them that knew him,*) *ſeveral of your immediate, and more remote* Deſcendants, *have been carried to their long Home before you. And while your Tears were yet flowing for one hopeful Branch of your Off-ſpring, who was growing up apace towards Maturity; God has touched You alſo in that* nearer Part, *the Subject of this Diſcourſe.*

BUT, Madam, *though You have thus* had Sorrow upon Sorrow; *yet you have no Reaſon to* ſorrow as One without Hope. *Thoſe ſprung from You, who are called hence, were Children of the Covenant; and* of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven. *The Excellent Perſons, to whom ſucceſſively You ſtood in the neareſt Relation, laboured to pleaſe Chriſt in their Stations while they lived, and are now pleaſed in Him and with Him. Allow me therefore to deſire, You'll bear ſome Part with* Them *in their preſent Joy. By the Favour of Providence You have a Proſpect, ſuperi-*

or

or to many others, of Comfort and Satisfaction from your ſurviving Poſterity, who have been ſo agreeable and dutiful both to the Dead and to You. After threatning Diſtempers and hazardous Accidents attending them, You live to ſee them entred upon the World with Hopes of Service and Comfort.

BUT above all, your Higheſt and Beſt Friend in Heaven ever lives. He has ſhewn a Care and Favour for You and Yours hitherto, which has ſignally rewarded the Chriſtian Bravery of your Pious Father, *in quitting with Chearfulneſs a noble Eſtate in* France, *rather than* make Shipwreck of Faith and of a good Conſcience. *I ſhould value the Entail of ſuch a Bleſſing, far beyond the Poſſeſſion of ſuch an Eſtate without it. For while You and your Poſterity ſhall continue to make it your great Aim, living and dying, to pleaſe the ſame Maſter; You may depend upon his Favour, in Life and Death too.*

THAT the Great God may be a Huſband to the Widow; *That* the Peace of God, which paſſes all Underſtanding, may keep your Heart and Mind in Chriſt Jeſus; *That the beſt of Bleſſings, for Time*

and for Eternity, may ever rest upon all Yours, and Theirs; and You may be guided by his Counsel, till You are brought to his Glory; *is the hearty Prayer of,*

Honour'd MADAM,

Your much obliged Friend,

and affectionate Servant,

Feb. 16. 1715.

John Evans.

A FU-

A FUNERAL

SERMON

FOR

Dr. DANIEL WILLIAMS.

2 COR. v. 9.

Wherefore we labour, that whether preſent or abſent, we may be accepted of him.

A GREAT *Man this Day is fallen in our Iſrael:* It is, I doubt not, the common Senſe of this mournful Aſſembly. The Improvement of ſo affecting a Providence from the Pulpit, is devolved upon One on many accounts unfit for it; were it not, that *as a Son with the Father, he hath ſerved with him in the Goſpel* here for ſeveral Years paſt. When upon that account this Province is aſſigned me, by *Her* whoſe Authority I could not diſpute in the Caſe; I would endeavour in the beſt manner I can, with God's Aſſiſtance, to excite you and myſelf, by the Life and by

the Death of this excellent Minister of Christ, to prepare to follow him into his Master's Joy.

THE highest Character of a Gospel-Minister, or of a private Christian, is drawn in the Text: And I think it was the most shining part of *His*. And the Temper and Course here exemplified is the surest way for us all in our several Stations, to obtain the glorious Rewards of another Life.

THERE were some, we find in the former Part of this Epistle, who had endeavoured to lessen St. *Paul's* just Esteem among the *Corinthians*, by false Insinuations. Therefore, after other Arguments in Vindication of himself and his faithful Brethren, he urges the noble Principles which governed them in their Ministry; shewing, that they acted not upon Temporal Considerations, but the Prospect of a World to come, and the Rewards and Punishments in Reversion there.

HE enters upon the Principles of *their Hope* at the 13th verse of the ivth Chapter, and carries it on through the Beginning of this. The Scope of his Argument is to this Effect*: "Knowing, "that God, who raised up Christ from "the Dead, will raise up us also; "therefore we preach the Gospel faithfully, not fearing any present Evils "which

* Vid. *Locke* in Loc.

" which it may draw upon us. For " we reckon the ſhort Afflictions which " may be endured here very inconſi- " derable, in compariſon of the Eternal " Things of a future Life; and we know " that they will be ſo far from hinder- " ing, that they will increaſe our Hap- " pineſs there. Therefore Death, which " will bring us home to Chriſt, is no " Terror to us. All our Care is, that, " whether we ſhall ſtay longer in the " Body, or ſoon leave it; whether living, " or dying; we may approve ourſelves to " Chriſt in our Miniſtry." In the two Verſes after the Text, he turns from their Hope to the darker Side, the Object of *their Fear*; the Puniſhment they muſt receive in the Day of Judgment, if they were unfaithful or remiſs in their Truſt.

WHILE he is repreſenting their Temper towards this and another Life, he launches out into an elegant Deſcription of our Relation to both States; how the Caſe ſtands with us with reference to the Body, and what we expect in the Life to come.

(1.) OUR *Abode here*, on the one hand, is but a Reſidence *in a Tabernacle*. Our Bodies are only *a Tent* ſet up for a Seaſon, like *the Tabernacle* in the Wilderneſs; ſuited to the Paſſage-ſtate wherein we are, and intended to be pull'd down ere long. But, on the other hand, we expect *in the Life to come* a more durable and excellent Dwel-

Ver. 1. ling, *a Houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*; a Manſion for our Souls, immediately prepared by God without any Human Agency; ſuitable to the Perfection and Continuance of the Heavenly State; that is, *Bodies* of a nobler Contexture; ſpiritual, incorruptible, immortal Bodies. Upon conſideration of the Difference, he goes
Ver. 2. on, *In this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be clothed upon with our Houſe which is from Heaven:* The Incumbrances and Sorrows and Sins, which attend us by occaſion of our ſojourning in our preſent Bodies, make us long for thoſe of a Heavenly Make. *If*
Ver. 3. *ſo be* (or, *Foraſmuch) that being clothed, we ſhall not be found naked.* If it were an abſolute, perpetual Separation from the Body which was to be expected, the Law of our Nature would reſtrain us from deſiring that: But ſince our vile Bodies are to be changed for glorious ones, therefore we
Ver. 4. deſire this advantagious Change. *For we, that are in this Tabernacle, do groan, being burthened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that Mortality might be ſwallowed up of Life.* Herein, as Chriſt upon the Croſs expreſſes the Reluctancy of Human Nature to a Separation, when he ſaid, *If it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me:* So the Apoſtle intimates, that he and other Chriſtians would not *chuſe in itſelf* to be ſtripped of their Bodies by Death, and to have them laid in the Grave,

Grave. If they could have the ſame Change, as that which will be made by the Reſurrection, to paſs upon them without Dying, as it will on thoſe found alive at Chriſt's Coming, this they could chuſe rather; an immediate Transfiguration of their mortal Bodies, into their incorruptible State. But we muſt underſtand him as deſigning a tacit Submiſſion to the Sovereign Pleaſure of God, in what way they ſhould come at their perfect Bodies. Theſe Aſpirings towards the State of the Reſurrection, he aſcribes to *the Operation of God*, Ver. 5. and particularly to *his giving them the Spirit* as an *Earneſt of the Inheritance.*

BUT ſuppoſing they could not immediately paſs from Imperfection to Perfection; but before they had their new Bodies, muſt lay down their old ones to ſee Corruption, and be pure Spirits for a Seaſon: What would they chuſe in that State of the Caſe? Why, even upon thoſe Terms they had rather *be with their Lord.* Though put the Caſe between Tranſlation and Reſurrection, they ſhould certainly prefer a Tranſlation; yet rather than *be abſent from the Lord*, they would quit their Bodies. He therefore riſes higher in the following words, and chuſes to be *ſeparate from the Body* rather than *ſeparate from Chriſt.* To uſher this in, he obſerves, that

(2.) WHILE we are *in the Body*, we

are *abſent from the Lord*; but when we *leave the Body*, we *go to the Lord*. This begins at *ver.* 6. The Original has a greater Force than our Tranſlation, and contains a lively Turn of Thought, with which the Apoſtle ſeems greatly delighted: For he dwells upon it in one Verſe after another. He repreſents Chriſtians, as belonging in different reſpects to two ſeveral Countries. By their Natural Birth, while they continue imbody'd, *this World* may in ſome reſpects be called *their Home*, their *Native Country*. Here they came into Being, and this is now their Reſidence. They have many Intereſts and Affairs here, which concern them as well as other People. And towards this State, and the People and Things of it, there is a ſtrong Biaſs in their Natures by means of their Bodies; like the particular Affection and Bent, which Men have for their own Country and People. Good Men themſelves, till they lay down their Bodies, cannot and ſhould not get above all Regards for theſe Alliances to Earth. But then, as they are *new-born*, they belong to *another Country*, where their Lord is; and to *another People*, the Family in Heaven. They are *Citizens* of the *New Jeruſalem, whither Chriſt as their Fore-runner is for them entered:* And while they are *here*, they continue *at a diſtance* from their more proper Home, which muſt be *with the Lord*.

This

This different State of the Case is plainly described; *Knowing that while we reside in the Body as our Home, we are absent from that* other (that better) *Home with the Lord.* The next Verse tells us, how this is: Not that there is no manner of Converse or Intercourse between Christ and his Servants now: But 'tis at a greater Distance, and in a more imperfect Way: *For we walk by Faith,* and *not by Sight:* As a People out of their own Country, know the Affairs of it more imperfectly by Relation at Second hand, than they would do if they were upon the Place. Ver. 6. Ver. 7.

WHEN the Case is thus stated, the Apostle declares, which of these he and such other Christians would chuse, if they had their Wish. *They were willing rather* (or they *should be much better pleased,*) *to travel out of the Body,* to quit that Home, *and to get Home to the Lord.* There was no room to hesitate in cool and calm Thoughts, which of these was preferable. Ver. 8.

AND thereupon, as the Conclusion of the whole Matter, he professes that Determination which we have in the Text: *Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.* As if he had said; "Since we know the Fa-"vour of Christ to be so valuable, that "for the sake of the fuller Enjoyment of "it we could chearfully consent to leave

"the

" the Body and all Things here; there-
" fore it is the Height of our Ambition,
" the Mark we chiefly aim at, that whe-
" ther we are in Heaven or upon Earth,
" both during the Courſe of this mortal
" Life and when we are actually leaving
" it, we may be acceptable to our Lord."

THAT which was the Frame and Temper of the Apoſtle and his faithful Aſſociates in their Times and Circumſtances, is the real Diſpoſition of all Chriſt's ſincere Diſciples in every Age, and in all the Stations which they are called to fill. So that we may juſtly found this General Maxim upon it.

THAT *'tis the great Aim and Endeavour of true Chriſtians, both while they ſojourn in the Body and when they leave it, to be acceptable and pleaſing to their great Lord.*

THERE is ſomewhat of this Temper in every Chriſtian: And as far as any Man acts like a Chriſtian, and worthy of that Name, this is indeed true of him. I ſhall therefore endeavour to ſtate *this Character* diſtinctly to you. To that Purpoſe *three* Things are to be conſidered, which the Text points at.

Firſt, THE End itſelf which Chriſtians propoſe,

propoſe, or the Mark they aim at: *To be accepted of their Lord.*

Secondly, How they ſtand affected towards this End, and what they do in proſecution of it: *They labour to be accepted of Him.* The more comprehenſive Senſe of the Word will be conſidered preſently.

Thirdly, THE Extent and Compaſs of their Concern and Care to reach this great Deſign: *Whether at Home, or from Home*; whether ſojourning in, or leaving the Body.

I. WE are to conſider *the End itſelf*, which Chriſtians ſhould propoſe and aim at. We read it, *that they may be accepted of Him.*

THIS Expreſſion is uſed in the New Teſtament for *our Admiſſion into a State of Favour and Acceptance* upon our firſt Believing. *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* Eph. i. 6. But that is not the Thing directly intended here. The Apoſtle, and thoſe whom he includes with himſelf, were *already* in ſuch a State, and aſſured that they were, ſo as to be able to look forward to another World with Comfort; as the whole Context ſhews. Every real Chriſtian indeed, as far as he has remaining Doubts of his State of Acceptance with God, cannot but be ſollicitous to have it ſecured and cleared. But that is a Matter pre-ſuppoſed to the Deſign here in view.

And

And the Original will be better expreſſed by rendering it, *to be well-pleaſing to him*; that is, to be ſuch, and to carry it in ſuch a Manner, that Chriſt may be *well-pleaſed with us*.

THE Thing aſpired after may be deſcribed by the following Steps:

I. A CHRISTIAN ſhould deſire, that Chriſt may *take Delight* and Complacency *in him*.

HE ſhould have ſomething farther in View, than merely that the Sentence of Condemnation be reverſed; that he may have *a real* as well as a relative *Change*, and may be ſuch a one as his Lord will like. Now there can be *no Complacency* farther than there is *a Suitableneſs*: Hence

Rom. viii. 8. *they that are in the Fleſh, cannot pleaſe him*; the abſolute Diſſimilitude of Nature and Temper makes it impoſſible. On the contrary, Chriſt *delights in his Servants*, as they bear his Image, and perform Obedience to his Will. Our Holineſs is not the Satisfaction to Juſtice for our Sins; nor the meriting Conſideration, for which we are accepted with God after our Apoſtacy: But 'tis the only Thing *in us*, which can be *amiable* in Chriſt's Eye. Therefore in Scripture he is ſpoken of as *delighting in his Servants*, only as they exerciſe Grace

John xiv. 21. Prov. xi. 20. and live in a Courſe of Obedience. *He that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him. Such as are upright*

right in their Way, are his Delight. This then ſhould be the Chriſtian's Ambition, to have the inward Glory and outward Luſtre of Holineſs, which will be pleaſing to his Holy Maſter.

2. IT ſhould be his Aim, that Chriſt's *Delight* and Pleaſure in him may be *more entire* and nearer Perfection, than it has been hitherto.

CHRIST's Complacency in his own Servants riſes or falls, in proportion to the Strength or Weakneſs of their holy Diſpoſitions; to the Fervency or Decay of their Love and Zeal for God; to the exemplary Luſtre of their Uſefulneſs and good Works; or to their Falls into Sin and Slumber to the Diſhonour of his Name. He cannot poſſibly *like* and *approve* any more in them than is truly Good: For Sin muſt be hateful to him *in them*, as well as in any others; he muſt be diſpleaſed at it, and with them for it. A Chriſtian therefore ſhould be ſollicitous, not only that he have *ſomething* in him *truly amiable* in his Lord's Account, but *much* which he will approve. He ſhould be afraid of any Thing remaining in him, or done by him, that may offend ſo good a Friend, and make it neceſſary that his Smiles ſhould be turned into Frowns. He ſhould aſpire in all Things to be *more* the Man which Chriſt would have him be, *in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs*; to outgrow

grow his Ignorance and Miſtakes, and Carnality and Negligence; and *to perfect Holineſs in the Fear of God: That he may* Phil. iii. 12. fully *apprehend that, for which he was apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus.*

3. It ſhould be his Deſire, to *outſtrip others* in Chriſt's Delight and Complacency.

An Emulation here is truly commendable. Chriſt does not *delight* in all his own Servants *alike.* Though they have *all* an equal Security for the eſſential Bleſſings of the Covenant; yet they are *not equally* the Objects of his Complacency; but *in proportion* to the Eminency of their Graces and the Brightneſs of their Character. *Daniel* is ſingled out as one *greatly beloved.* Dan. ix. 23. And among all the Apoſtles, 'tis ſaid with an Emphaſis of *John*, that he was *the Diſciple whom Jeſus loved.* John xiii. 23.

Those that ſhine with uncommon Rays of Holineſs, *the Excellent of the Earth*, are *his peculiar Delight:* He has a ſpecial Value for them, he glories in them. Who would not be ambitious of ſuch a firſt Place in the Eſteem of his great Lord, as *Job* had! when God himſelf propoſed him for a Non-ſuch; *Haſt thou conſidered my Servant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil?* Job i. 8. Every Chriſtian ſhould aſpire to ſtand in the firſt Rank of his Worthies, and not content

content himſelf with a vulgar ſhare in his Maſter's Approbation.

4. HE ſhould be concerned, that he may receive *the fulleſt* and *moſt diſtinguiſhing Marks* of Chriſt's Delight and Pleaſure in him.

HE encourages us to expect proportionable Diſcoveries of his Love, and peculiar Signs of Favour, if we outſtrip others. *In this World* he is uſed to grant larger Meaſures of his Grace, to thoſe who improve moſt carefully their preſent Stock, and to give moſt Comfort and Refreſhments by the Way to his beſt Servants. He frequently *honours them* by extraordinary Favours of Providence or Grace, who *honour him* in the moſt diſtinguiſhing manner in the Courſe of their Lives. He gives them more remarkable Anſwers to Prayer, more chearful Foretaſts of Glory, or the like Tokens of ſpecial Love. This is ordinarily his way with his Servants now.

BUT ſuppoſe eminent Saints ſhould miſs of theſe, or ſome of theſe *Signals of diſtinguiſhing Favour* now; yet we have certain Aſſurances of *a full Diſtinction* to be made *in the Life to come*, not only between the Enemies and the Friends of Chriſt, but among good Men themſelves, according to the Degree of their Care to ſerve and pleaſe him. People are differently employed; but according to the *Labour* they uſe in their Stations, *their Wages* will be.

He

1 Cor. iii. 8. *He that planteth, and he that watereth, are one; and every man shall receive his own Reward, according to his own Labour.* The present Life is the *Seed-Time* for us all; but the *Harvest* will answer the Seed sown.

2 Cor. ix. 6. *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully.* Of those that get to Heaven, some will find their Happiness abated by the Alloys in their Character on Earth, in comparison of more uniform Christians. Some *build* on Christ the true Foundation *Gold, Silver, and precious Stones:* Now upon the Trial, *if any Man's Work abide which he hath built, he shall receive a Reward*, that is, a proportionable Reward: *But if any Man's Work shall be burnt*, as far as it will not stand the Trial, *he shall suffer Loss*, it will lessen his Reward; *but he shall be saved, yet so as by Fire*; with great Difficulty, in comparison of the other. *They that turn many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars.* Now certainly such Declarations as these, are not made with no Design; but to excite our Ambition, *to covet the best* of our Master's *Gifts*, and the highest Marks of his Favour. Though we are unworthy to have *the meanest Place* in his House on Earth, or especially in the Heavenly State: Yet when he has set *the highest* as a Prize in our View, it is not Modesty, but an unworthy Meanness of Spirit in a Christian,

1 Cor. iii. 11,—15.

Dan. xii. 3.

not

not to aſpire to the *nobleſt Recompences*, with which *the King* of Glory *will delight to honour* his ſpecial Favourites.

II. I AM to ſhew, How Chriſtians *ſtand affected* towards ſuch an End as this, and *what they do* in proſecution of it.

WE *labour* for this purpoſe: So we tranſlate the Word φιλοτιμεμεθα. In its original Senſe 'tis as much as to ſay, *We love or deſire it as a Point of Honour*. And as Ambition is a powerful Principle of Action, from thence it comes (both in the *New-Teſtament*, and in other Authors,) to ſignify *the Purſuit* of any End *with uncommon Study* and *Diligence* and *Application*. As an ambitious Courtier, who is ſet upon gaining his Prince's Favour, will turn about in his Thoughts all ways of compaſſing his End; make every Thing he is Maſter of, ſubſervient to his Deſign; relinquiſh other Aims, when they cannot be made to comport with this; and uſe unwearied Pains, and perſevering Labour, to come at his Point: So the Chriſtian ſhould *ſtand affected* towards his great End of *pleaſing Chriſt*; and thus ſhould he *act*, that he may reach it.

Rom. xv. 20. 1 Theſſ. iv. 11.

THREE Things may comprehend the Chriſtian Temper in this Caſe.

1. A CHRISTIAN ſettles it with himſelf for his *higheſt Ambition* to pleaſe Chriſt.

It ſhould be a determined Point with us, that this is the moſt honourable Aim we can have in View. The Generality of People form quite another practical Judgment, and accordingly govern themſelves by it. They are eaſily diverted from their Duty, or perſuaded to embark in the worſt Intereſts, becauſe *they ſeek not the Honour which cometh from God only.* But a true Chriſtian will eſteem it *the greateſt Honour* of which he is capable, to ſtand fair in Chriſt's Eſteem, and to have a Proſpect of receiving his bleſſed Approbation of *Well done, good and faithful Servant.* The Dignity, the Wiſdom, the Supream Authority of the Approver, give his Sentence the greateſt Weight. Men court the Favour of Princes, and value themſelves mightily upon a Share in it: What ſhould it then be accounted, to ſtand fair with *the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords?* To be in the good Opinion of Men of good Senſe and Judgment, is juſtly valued: But here is *the moſt infallible Judge* of true Worth. We ſtudy eſpecially to pleaſe thoſe, from whom we have the moſt to hope or fear: But Chriſt is to paſs *the definitive Sentence* upon all Men and all their Actions, ſo as to adjudge them paſt Retrieve either *to everlaſting Life*, or *to Shame and everlaſting Contempt.* The Chriſtian therefore wiſely eſteems *this*, the Aim moſt worthy of his Nature and Obligations, of

John v. 44.

his

his Profeſſion and beſt Intereſts; and therefore comes to a fixed Reſolution, that he will make it his *Study to ſhew himſelf approved to him.* 2 Tim. ii. 15.

2. HE makes *all other Conſiderations give place* to this his higheſt Ambition.

As *we cannot ſerve two Maſters*; ſo we cannot make two Sorts of Good our ſupream End; but *either we ſhall hate the one, and love the other; or elſe hold to the one, and deſpiſe the other:* Either be violently ſet upon the one, and againſt the other; or at leaſt, moſt ſteadily purſue the one, and treat the other in compariſon with Indifference. A Chriſtian therefore, having determined *this* to be his moſt becoming and reaſonable Aim, *to pleaſe his Maſter in Heaven*, will allow nothing elſe the ſame Place; much leſs will he make *this* to truckle to lower Deſigns. He is not ſo ſet upon *pleaſing himſelf*, but that he can chearfully conſent to *deny himſelf* too, that he may follow and pleaſe his Maſter; to relinquiſh his Eaſe, when his Maſter calls him out to hard Service; or to expoſe his Credit and Reputation, when he cannot avoid Reproaches without being unfaithful to Chriſt and his Intereſt. For he purſues his Approbation, through *Honour and Diſhonour*, through *evil Report and good Report*; yea, *even his Life he counts not dear to him, ſo that he may finiſh his Courſe with Joy.* He is willing to *pleaſe* Mat. vi. 24. Mat. xvi. 24. 2 Cor. vi. 8. Acts xx. 24.

other Men, as far as is consistent with his Duty: For he pays a due regard to the Authority of Superiors, to the Tenderneſſes of Relations and Friends, to the Judgment of the Wiſe and Good, and even to the common Opinion of the World: All theſe have their Weight with him in their proper Spheres. Chriſtianity teaches him, by all innocent ways, to recommend himſelf to the Love and Eſteem of other People; to *pleaſe his Neighbour for his good to Edification.* For this purpoſe he'll practiſe frequent Forbearance and many Condeſcenſions, and freely part with his own Right in ſome Caſes: But he will not ſuffer by any means, this End to be ſet on a Level with the *pleaſing of Chriſt:* In that comparative View the Apoſtle ſays, *If I yet pleaſed Men, then were I not the Servant of Chriſt.* He behaves inoffenſively to Men as far as he can, as a Part of his Duty to Chriſt: But when he muſt break with them, or offend his Maſter, then comparatively he will *hate Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Siſters, and his own Life alſo* for Chriſt's Sake. He *obeys God, rather* than the greateſt Authority upon Earth; and renounces the Influence of the deareſt Friend, with a *Get thee behind me, Satan.* In a Word, he dares not commit the leaſt known Sin, or deny the leaſt Truth

Rom. xv. 2.

Gal. i. 10.

Luke xiv. 26.

Truth of God, to pleaſe all the World or the beſt Man upon Earth.

3. HE will carefully *direct his Actions and Endeavours* in the beſt Manner he can towards his great End.

THIS directly expreſſes the Force of our Tranſlation. *We labour* to be well-pleaſing to Chriſt. 'Tis a vain Thing to profeſs that we deſire and intend his Approbation, if the Courſe of our Actions is quite another way; or indeed, if they carry not a plain Biaſs and Tendency towards it: For *that* is a Man's governing Aim, which he chiefly purſues. He that would in earneſt be what Chriſt would have him be, *cares how he may pleaſe the Lord.* I mean not, that this Deſign can be ſuppoſed actually to come into his Thoughts in every particular Action he does: That is next to impoſſible. But ſuch a Man will take a great deal of Pains to diſcover his Maſter's Will; to *prove what is acceptable to the Lord*, whoſe he is, and whom he deſires to ſerve. He employs himſelf moſt in ſuch Things, as are certainly agreeable to him: He cannot ſatisfy himſelf to want, or ſo much as ſeem to want, the Qualifications indiſpenſably neceſſary to his Acceptance; and his Pleaſure and Buſineſs is in the Diſcharge of his Duty: Whereas, on the contrary, he keeps a ſtrict Guard againſt every known Offence. In the deliberate and more important Ac-

Eph. v. 10.

tions of Life, he will oblige himſelf to enquire particularly, how far they ſuit with his Deſign. All the Talents and Capacities he is furniſhed with, are conſecrated without Reſerve to his Lord: Nor can he be content to refer one Sort of Actions only to this End, while others are ordinarily exempted; as ſuppoſe a Man ſhould pretend to pleaſe Chriſt in his Religious Actions, but not in the Courſe of Common Life. A ſincere Chriſtian purſues his Approbation in every Station he fills; in every Relation wherein he ſtands; with every Talent, natural or acquired, of Body or Mind or Eſtate, wherewith he is intruſted. A devoted Servant of this Maſter cannot ſatisfy himſelf to neglect his Duty, when he can propoſe no other Aim by it beſides Chriſt's Acceptance; as for Inſtance, ſuch Parts of his Duty as are inviſible to Men, or unreputable in the account of the World. He will take pains, to *purify his Heart*, as well as *his Life*;

1 Pet. iii. 4. to *adorn the hidden man of the Heart, which in the ſight of God is of great Price*; and to manage all his Performances in that Manner, which he has reaſon to hope

Col. iii. 23. Chriſt will like beſt; to *do all heartily* and chearfully, *as to the Lord, and not to men*; and to carry his Conformity and Obedience to him, to the greateſt Heights he

Mal. i. 13. 14. can. He'll think himſelf concerned, in Acts of Worſhip, not to *bring the torn, and*

and the lame, and the ſick, but *the Male of his Flock*; and in the Service of Life, to *do his beſt* for the Glory of God and the Benefit of his Generation.

THERE is yet another Branch of the Character to be enlarged upon; and that is,

III. THE *Extent and Compaſs* of a Chriſtian's *Concern* and *Care* to reach his excellent Aim. *Whether preſent, or abſent*; whether continuing in the Body, or diſlodging out of it; he *preſſes towards the Mark of this Prize*, to be acceptable to Chriſt.

SOME indeed refer this, to *our Acceptance with Chriſt:* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, "We deſire, that Chriſt may be "*well-pleaſed with us* here and hereafter: "We ſtrive, both for thoſe Marks of Ac- "ceptance which he grants his Servants in "this World, and eſpecially for the higher "Tokens of it in the Life to come." And this is, without doubt, in the Chriſtian's View; as there has been Occaſion to ſhew already. He is ſollicitous for the Grace and Mercy he needs from Chriſt by the Way; and for *his Mercy* alſo *unto Eternal Life*. He deſires to belong to Chriſt's Family, on Earth, and in Heaven too. Jude *ver.* 21.

BUT I apprehend, we are rather to refer theſe Words, to *the Chriſtian's Concern* about being acceptable to Chriſt. As if he

had said, " Whether we are going on in " Life, or on the very Borders of another " World, this is *the Ambition* and *Concern* " of our Souls*." This emphatical Addition may bespeak three Things.

1. THAT a Christian is *more concerned* to have *Christ pleased with him*, than about *the Time* of his Life or his Death; whether he is to continue in the Body, for a longer, or a shorter Time.

THUS the Words will be brought in as a Sort of Check to those *eager Desires* of leaving the Body and going home to the Lord, which the Apostle had expressed in the foregoing Verse. " However, though " were I to chuse for my own Interest, " I should gladly quit this Body to be " with my Lord: Yet as to that, *not as I* " *will, but as my Lord will.* I am con- " tent, for that and every Thing else, to " be concluded by his Determination. " Let me but have my higher Wish in " this, that I am *acceptable to Christ*; and " then, *whether in the Body, or out of the* " *Body*, I am fully satisfied in his Choice " for me." He expresses just the same Temper

* As the words lie in the Original, they may admit of either Sense: Διο και φιλοτιμουμεθα, ειτε ενδημουντες, ειτε εκδημουντες, ευαρεστοι αυτω ειναι. The words I am now considering, lie in the midst between φιλοτιμουμεθα and ευαρεστοι; and therefore may without Absurdity be applied to either. Yet I apprehend, if they were intended to relate to the last, they would rather have run, ευαρεστοι αυτω ειναι, ειτε ενδημ. &c.

Temper in his Epiſtle to the *Philippians*; *According to my earneſt Expectation and my Hope, that in nothing I ſhall be aſhamed; but that with all Boldneſs, as always, ſo now alſo, Chriſt ſhall be magnified in my Body, whether it be by Life or by Death.* His greateſt Hope and Wiſh was, that *Chriſt ſhould be magnified in him*; whether *by his Life*, in active Service to his Intereſt; or *by his Death*, ſuffering for the Teſtimony of Jeſus. And therefore, tho' afterwards he declares the ſame Preference of *a Departure to be with Chriſt*, as he does in this Context; yet upon an Apprehenſion that it would be more for the Intereſt of Chriſt and his Church, that he ſhould remain a little longer below, he expreſſes himſelf *fully ſatisfied* to do ſo. Such ought to be the Frame of Chriſtians in general. Heaven ſhould be preferr'd to Earth, *as far better:* But they ſhould be *fully willing* to ſtay or go at Chriſt's Pleaſure; to exerciſe *Patience* in waiting for their own Reward, till they *have done* all the Service which Chriſt will have from them below; and *have borne* all the Exerciſe he is pleaſed to aſſign them, either by ſuffering for his Cauſe, or enduring the Pains and Sickneſs of a crazy Body, or the Infirmities of Age. *Faith* and *Patience* are indeed *needful* to a Chriſtian, who knows he ſhall go to his Father's Houſe when he leaves this; *that after*

Phil. i. 20.

Ver. 23, 24, 25.

Heb. x. 36.

after he has done the Will of God, he may receive the Promise: But this he should be striving and praying for, that he may be *chearfully willing* to deny himself in this, as well as other Cases, for the pleasing of his Master.

2. It may intimate, that a real Christian *continues* and perseveres *in this holy Temper* to the End.

He *defers not*, on the one hand, to make Provision for so important a Concern till his last Moments; but pursues his Prize, living as well as dying; and though he should begin early, would reckon the whole Course of this short Life little enough to lay in for the Smiles of his Master. On the contrary, he is *not satisfied* with a transient Care in this Matter; but keeps up *the same Concern* to the last; as knowing, that *if he should draw back*, Christ *would have no Pleasure in him.* A lively Christian works hard all the Day, and yet is not weary of his Master's Service in the Evening. And for certain, when he comes actually into the separate State, he'll be far from changing his Bias: Though there will be no Occasion then for any painful Pursuit of his Design; yet a Tendency, a Bent towards it, will be the Temper most connatural to his confirmed and perfect State.

Heb. x. 38.

3. This may be intended to signify, that a Christian will *shew his Desire* to please

pleaſe Chriſt, *both in Life and Death*, by a ſuitable Behaviour in both. *If he lives, he lives to the Lord; and if he dies, he dies to the Lord; whether he live therefore or die, he is the Lord's.* Rom. xiv. 8.

As long as a Chriſtian remains in the Body, *to him to live is Chriſt.* He will readily do him all the active Service he can; while he has Breath and Being, with his Health, and Strength, and Capacities of all Kinds. As a Probationer and a Citizen of this World, he endeavours to manage himſelf with a farther View than to this World: Though he lives in it, his Life is directed to higher Aims, than any Thing within the Bounds of Time. Phil. i. 21.

AND when he has it in nearer View, that he ſhall *leave the Body*; yet he'll expreſs a Devotedneſs to Chriſt in ways ſuitable to his preſent Circumſtances. When *dying*, he *labours to pleaſe Chriſt.* If he is threatned with Death by the Cruelty of Perſecutors, unleſs he will be unfaithful to his Maſter; he is content to offer Life a Sacrifice to him: As St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *I am ready, not to be bound only, but alſo to die at Jeruſalem for the Name of the Lord Jeſus.* And when Death makes it's Approaches in the ordinary way, as he has Room and Opportunity, he will be glad to do Chriſt Service in his laſt Moments; to be a Witneſs of his Goodneſs and Fidelity, and of the Pleaſures of his Service, Acts xxi. 13.

to

to those about him; and to leave the best Impressions he can, on the Minds of his surviving Relations or Friends: As St. *Peter*, *knowing that he must shortly put off this Tabernacle*, endeavoured, that those who had been his Charge before, *might be able after his Decease to have the things* wherein he had instructed them *always in Remembrance*. A good Man will contrive with pleasure for the Good of future Times, when he is bidding an Adieu to the World himself; that Christ's Honour may be promoted, and his Service advanced, as far as he has a Capacity for it, when he himself is dead and gone. Charitable Benefactions out of his Substance, or good Advices to those that come after him, will be a pleasant Employment, when Flesh and Heart are failing. 'Tis true, Good Men have not always Time, or Strength and Spirits, for this; or they may not be apprehensive of Death immediately approaching: For the best Men may be *surprized* with the Harbingers of Death, as well as other People, or may not be sensible how near Life is ebbing out; though they are *not surprized* with Death itself, so as to be altogether *unprepared* for it. But supposing a Christian, to discern *his Departure at hand*, to be in a present chearful Frame, and to have a desirable Supply of natural Spirits; he will be glad

2 Pet. i. 14, 15.

to

to seal his Testimony for Christ with his last Breath.

AND now, having drawn out *this Character* of a real and lively Christian, according to the Apostle's Description in the Text; 'tis fit I should come to make some *Application.* And that shall be in the following Inferences.

(1.) WE may collect hence, *how great a Thing it is,* to be a Christian.

'TIS far more, than wearing a different Name from the rest of the World: For it refines and raises a Man's governing Aim and Bent. It gives him a new Centre, and consequently alters his Tendencies and Inclinations. He chiefly loves and regards an unseen Saviour, and makes more account of his Smiles or Frowns, than of the Friendship or Enmity of all the World. And his Course of acting is suitable to a Heart thus fixed. May it not then be justly feared, even of most that bear the Denomination, that they are altogether unacquainted with the Temper and Spirit, of Christians! They pass under the Name: But the Designs they plainly pursue, mark them out for *Men of the World, whose Portion is in this Life.* They *rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the Bread of Carefulness,* to compass some secular Design: But the *pleasing of Christ* appears to have little

Psal. xvii. 14. cxxvii. 2.

little Place in their Thoughts, becauſe 'tis evident *that* is not made the Scope of their Lives. They are either purſuing Ends inconſiſtent with this, or diſcover a Negligence here, which ſpeaks other things to have the Aſcendant in their Affections. But the true Chriſtian firſt ſettles his great End, and then in the main of his Character acts conſiſtently with it both living and dying.

(2.) THIS Character of a Chriſtian, may juſtly *put the Beſt among us to the Bluſh*, and engage to deep Repentance and Humiliation, that we *act ſo far beneath* the Aims by which we profeſs to govern ourſelves.

IF Conſcience can vouch for us, that we have fixed our End right; yet in how many Caſes may it be our Monitor, That either we forget our chief Deſign, or purſue it with great Coldneſs and Inconſtancy! It was our Saviour's Obſervation, and every Age proves it too true, That *the Children of this World are wiſer in their Generation, than the Children of Light:* That is, Thoſe who have acted the moſt fooliſh Part in the Settlement of their chief End, ſatisfying themſelves with a Portion here, generally take wiſer Steps in purſuit of the Good they have fixed upon, than thoſe, who have made their Choice by better Light, ordinarily do for

Luke xvi. 8.

ſecuring

ſecuring theirs. The ambitious Courtier, the covetous Miſer, the Man of Pleaſure, proſecute their ſeveral Aims with Eagerneſs and Application; can deny themſelves in other Matters to reach the Point of their Wiſhes; and are very ſollicitous to know what Progreſs they make towards their End by all their Endeavours. But how often may Conſcience reproach us with practical Indifference in our greateſt Concernment! We ſuffer ourſelves to go off from our Centre; we forget our Maſter, and how we ſhould behave to him; we let other Aims carry us impetuouſly after them, and go on at an Uncertainty whether our Maſter approves us or no. Such Sallies from our main End, are the greater Reproach to us, when we have fixed our Choice on a Deſign ſo worthy and reaſonable. It ſhould *humble us* before God, and at the Bar of our Conſciences, that when we took the wiſeſt Step of our whole Lives in determining to ſeek the Favour of Chriſt as our principal Intereſt, we ſhould carry it more irrationally in Purſuit of ſuch an End, than thoſe who have only fading Trifles in view.

(3.) WE ſhould all be excited to *a Conformity of Temper* to that expreſſed here by the holy Apoſtle: We ſhould be *delivered into the ſame Mould.*

ARE you hitherto utter Strangers to any

any ſuch Biaſs? Have you never bent your thoughts towards *pleaſing of Chriſt*; but merely lived to your ſelves, or the Humours and Inclinations of your Fellow-Creatures? Think a little, how unjuſtly and unrighteouſly you have lived. *Chriſt* has the moſt undoubted Claim to your being thus affected towards him. You are his in Right, before your own Conſent. He is clothed with his Father's Authority for your Subjection: He has bought you with the Price of his own Blood: Moſt of you have been ſolemnly dedicated to his Service: You *call him Lord*, which beſpeaks your full Obligation to this. Either therefore renounce the Name of *Chriſtians*; or let Him be owned in his Claims from you. How ungrateful is your Refuſal, after all his Condeſcenſion and Grace! He *pleaſed not himſelf*, but became *a Man of Sorrows*, *made himſelf of no Reputation*, *became obedient unto Death*, for your Sakes: And can you refuſe this Return of Duty and Affection? You are called to *live to him*, *who died for you*, (that you might become pleaſing to God through him,) *and roſe again*, that he might receive the Teſtimonies of your Devotedneſs to him. What Enemies are you to your own Intereſt, by ſtanding out againſt this Demand! You have *no other way* to ſecure your everlaſting Welfare, but by his Favour. Can you think of dying, while

2 Cor. v. 15.

while He is not your Friend, who *has the Keys of the invisible World and of Death*; who has the Power *to give eternal Life*, or sentence to eternal Death! You have *a more certain way* to secure his Approbation, than the Esteem of men: They are humorous, inconstant, and of different Sentiments: But he is *of one Mind*, and has let us know his Will; and is easily pleased by any one that heartily makes it his Business: *If there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man has.* And I may justly say, if you would be persuaded to make a Trial, you would find the truest Pleasure to yourselves in pursuing Christ's Approbation. In Pursuit of this End, you would find *Rest to your Souls*, and that *Peace of God through Christ, to keep your hearts and minds*, which is not to be met with elsewhere.

Rev. i. 18.

2 Cor. viii. 12.

IF we have deliberately settled upon this for our governing Aim, let us pursue it with the *Spirit* of the Text: Often review our End; recall ourselves, when we are going off from it; and press towards it with more Zeal, and Steadiness, and Uniformity; endeavouring to *walk worthy of our Lord, unto all pleasing*. Every Branch of Holiness and Duty will be then natural and easy to us; *in keeping his Commands* we shall feel *a great Reward*. Conscience will furnish us with a constant Entertainment. Afflictions and Sufferings will lose

Col. i. 10.

Psal. xix. 11.

their Sting: Chriſt, whom we ſerve, will care for us, and be with us, in all our Difficulties: His Spirit will *help our Infirmities*, and *abide with us as a Comforter*. Death itſelf will have a chearful Aſpect; and *an Entrance* will be *miniſtred to us abundantly into his everlaſting Kingdom*.

2 Pet. i. 11.

(4.) We have great Reaſon to *lament it as a ſenſible Loſs* to our World, when *ſuch Chriſtians*, and eſpecially *ſuch Miniſters*, are *removed hence*, as were eminently governed by this noble Aim.

Such Perſons are the moſt diffuſive Bleſſings, while they live: Acting under this Influence, they fill up their ſeveral Stations at another Rate than the common Rank of People, to the Honour of God and the Good of Mankind. *Miniſters* eſpecially, (as their Office and Buſineſs has the moſt beneficial tendency to the higheſt Intereſts of men,) when they behave themſelves in their Work with a lively Regard to their Maſter's Judgment, ſpread a Bleſſing around them, and have ſuch Opportunities to do Good as come not in every one's Way. Therefore all the Time allowed them to ſtay below, while they are capable of acting for their Maſter, is a Kindneſs to the Places where they are. *To abide in the Fleſh* (ſays the Apoſtle,) *is more needful for you*. And if their Wiſdom and Experience are ripened by advancing

Phil. i. 24.

vancing Years, they may do more Service then in a ſmall Compaſs of Time, than they were capable of before in a far longer Space.

You are therefore all ſenſible, what a wide Breach is made upon us in the Death of *our venerable Father and dear Friend*, whoſe Remains were lately laid in the ſilent Duſt; who among all his Excellencies was moſt eminent for this, that *living and dying* he *laboured to pleaſe his Maſter in Heaven*: For this conſecrated all his other Endowments, and made them ſhine with Luſtre, and ſpread a lively Warmth around.

HE was furniſhed with many uncommon Advantages for Service. GOD bleſſed him by Nature with an unuſual Genius: He had a copious Invention, a penetrating Judgment, a faithful Memory, and vigorous Affections: Theſe were cultivated by much thought, and diligent reading. His Mind was capable of the cloſeſt Application, and could eaſily dive into Points of no ſmall Difficulty, immediately faſten upon the main Hinge of a Debate, (which was eſpecially remarkable in his Reſolution of Caſes of Conſcience;) could ſurvey the Compaſs of an Argument, turn it on all its Sides, and repreſent it in all its Views, with as great Force and Quickneſs as were ever met with in any man. This *natural*

Strength of his Mind ſupplied ſome Diſadvantages in his Education at firſt ſetting out, which would have cramped a common Genius through his whole Life.

To ſuch a Make of Mind was added a ſtrong and vigorous Conſtitution of Body, which was favourably continued to him till his elder Years. That Diſtemper, which moſt of his Friends apprehended might have been peculiarly dangerous to him, the *Small-Pox*, he eſcaped to the laſt. And before he appeared in this City, he was poſſeſſed by the Bounty of Providence of a conſiderable Share of worldly Subſtance; which, with his large Acquaintance and diffuſive Influence, gave him Advantages for Uſefulneſs beyond many of his Brethren.

These Things indeed, without good Principles and Ends to govern them, will not ſerve to brighten a Character: When wrong ſet, they only make men more capable of oppoſing the Intereſt of Chriſt in the World. But that which gave them all a real Luſtre in him was this, that he liſted them All in the Service of his Great Lord.

He began to mind Religion in earneſt in his younger Years; as I have learnt from his own Converſe, and the Information of others who knew the Zeal of his youthful Days: And entred upon the Miniſtry

Miniſtry on the deſpiſed bottom of *Non-conformity*, in an early part of his own Age, not being then arrived at *twenty*; and one of the earlieſt of the riſing Generation, after the melancholy Ejection of *Two thouſand Miniſters* in 1662.

WHEN he had preached for a few Years occaſionally in ſeveral Parts of *England*, and found the Times here ſo frowning on a *Proteſtant Diſſenter*, that he could have little Proſpect of purſuing his Miniſtry on this ſide the Water; Providence very ſeaſonably opened him a way for Service in *Ireland*; where even *in thoſe Times* the Government ſaw fit to treat Men of his Principle, amidſt a Swarm of bigotted *Papiſts*, in a very different Manner from the Uſage of their Brethren here, and even from the Difficulties thrown upon the *Preſbyterians* of *Ireland* ſince, whereby their Hands are tied down to this Day from ſerving the Government. As he made an occaſional Viſit to a pious Lady *, who *was not aſhamed* of the Diſſenters *Chain*; he received an unexpected Invitation to be *Chaplain* to a Noble Family of that Kingdom †. There he found a Refuge from the Storm, and at length was called to the *Paſtoral Office* in the City of *Dublin* over a Congregation of principal Figure there. In that Kingdom he had

* Lady *Wilbraham* of *Weſton* in *Shropſhire*. † The Counteſs of *Meath*.

an Opportunity of publick Service, for near *twenty Years*, by his Labours in the Pulpit, by his prudent Advice, by the Improvement of the Intereſt he obtained in Perſons of the higheſt Rank, and by many other Methods in which Providence choſe to make him a general Bleſſing. There he filled his Station with unuſual Acceptance, in great Harmony with his Brethren in the Miniſtry, and reſpected by moſt who were *hearty Proteſtants* in that Iſland; till he was driven away with many others, by the tyrannical and violent Proceedings of a *Popiſh Adminiſtration* in the Reign of King *James*.

In this City, to which he made his Retreat, he was ſoon obſerved and eſteemed, and invited to more Congregations than one for their ſtated Miniſter. But God, in his kind Providence, reſerved him for *You*, where he has continued in the Service of the Goſpel about *Twenty-ſeven Years*.

Upon the Death of the pious Mr. *Baxter*, he was choſen into the *Merchants Lecture* at *Pinner's Hall*. There was another Competitor propoſed*; and the Electors happened to be equally divided. It was therefore immediately agreed, that they ſhould appeal to Providence by *a Lot*; which fell upon *him*. Upon this Occaſion, a Perſon well known to be a Judge of men,

* Mr. *Woodcock*.

men, and far from being prejudiced in his Favour†, said, "That though he had "served his Friend, yet now he thought "every one ought to acquiesce in the "Choice, upon so immediate Direction of "Heaven, and that Mr. *Williams* was a Per-"son of the best natural Parts in *England*."

THE unhappy Differences, which fell out afterwards, and the strange and hard Treatment which he met with from some, I chuse to pass over in Silence; wishing, (as he did,) that it may for ever be buried in Forgetfulness. It is neither in my Inclination, nor a Thing becoming me, to revive those preter-natural Heats, since the Flame was far spent before my Acquaintance with him. Yet I cannot forbear mentioning it, to the Praise of *this Congregation*, that You faithfully stood by your Minister in all his Difficulties; and to the Praise of God, (as I have heard him and many others take notice of it, who were acquainted with the Transactions of those Times,) that God gave him that Sedateness and Calm, beyond his natural Temper, and that Presence of Mind under his eager Prosecutions, which defeated the Designs against him. And I will add with Pleasure from my own Knowledge; that he lived to soften the Minds of many who were most angry at him, and to convince not a few, that they had taken

† Mr. *Jer. White*.

up very wrong Apprehenſions concerning him.

I AM ſatisfied, thoſe who knew him beſt, had the greateſt Eſteem for him; and could not but diſcern juſt Grounds to believe, that *his governing Aim* was to be *acceptable to Chriſt.*

IN the Exerciſe of his *Miniſtry*, he ſtudied to ſhew himſelf *approved to God, and to every man's Conſcience in the Sight of God.* He had a very ſtrong Conviction of the Importance and Deſign of the *Miniſterial Work*; and therefore diligently laboured in it *in Seaſon, and out of Seaſon.* His Subjects were generally of a *practical* Nature; and yet (whatever ſome have ſuggeſted,) he was a ſtrenuous Aſſerter of the Grace of God. His Thoughts were ſolid and copious; ſo as to go over the whole Compaſs of a Subject, and to take in an uncommon Variety of that which was pertinent to it. His Manner of managing it, was plain and Scriptural; with an Intermixture of doctrinal and applicatory parts, with great Propriety and Life. Light and Heat were joined together in his Diſcourſes. He ſeldom cloſed a Sermon without a particular Addreſs to good and bad Men, according to the Tenor of his Subject; and ſome cloſe Queſtions to them upon it, which were peculiarly adapted to ſend them Home in a ſerious Frame.

He

He had a ſpecial Happineſs in explaining the Nature of our *Covenanting with God*, ſo as to make People ſenſible of the Deſign and Force of it. And I cannot but apprehend, we ſhould find it turn to a good Account in the Courſe of our Miniſtry, if we were more plain and frequent in this important Matter.

AND as he preached *in earneſt*, ſo he was *a conſtant Preacher*. When he was ſeized ſeven Years ago with that firſt Illneſs, which began viſibly to break his Conſtitution, he was heard to ſay, "that from his "firſt Entrance upon the Miniſtry to that "Time, he had never been obliged wholly "to omit Preaching for above *five* Lord's-"days." And with what unwearied Zeal he continued in that his beloved Work among you, though frequently under great Indiſpoſitions in his later Years, you are all Witneſſes.

HIS *Succeſſes* were remarkable as well as his Labours, for the Converſion of ſome, the Improvement of others, and the Direction many received by the Word of God in his mouth in particular Difficulties; of which I could tell ſome remarkable Inſtances. His anniverſary *Sermons to young People* on that Day of leiſure, *Chriſtmas-Day*, (which he preached himſelf all the time he continued among you, except once,) had the Bleſſing to begin a good Work in ſeveral.

THE

THE ſame Love to his Maſter's Intereſt, which ſpirited him to ſo much Zeal in his own Miniſterial Work, induced him to encourage *the Sons of the Prophets*, and the younger Generation of Miniſters. No man was a more candid Hearer of their Publick Performances, or more glad of an opportunity to help them forward into Uſefulneſs; and yet no man a more faithful Friend by kind and neceſſary Admonitions, when there was Occaſion for it. Upon *Eleven Years* Experience I muſt declare, that ſuch was his Condeſcenſion and friendly Behaviour in all that Time to one *ſo much his Junior*, that I could not expect to ſerve in the Goſpel with any other with more Eaſineſs and Satisfaction of Mind. And I have had the ſame Account from both my worthy Predeceſſors in that Relation to him, both in *Ireland* and *England* *.

THE ſame Deſign which he purſued in the Pulpit, was the Thing he had in View in *his Writings* alſo; *viz.* the Service of Chriſt. As he endeavoured conſcientiouſly to form his Principles of Faith and Practice upon an impartial Enquiry into the Mind of God in the Scriptures: So whereever he thought *Truth* carried him, he boldly avowed it without Diſguiſe or Concealment, whatever Cenſures or Oppoſitions

* Mr. *Joſeph Boyſe*, and Dr. *Edmund Calamy*.

tions he might have reaſon to expect. And whatever he thought *the preſent Truth*, or that Branch of the Chriſtian Scheme which was moſt ſtruck at in any preſent Juncture; he was one of the moſt forward to appear for it. This gave Riſe to thoſe of his *Writings* which are *Controverſial*; wherein People of Candour and Impartiality, whether they agree with his Sentiments or no, muſt ſee a very honeſt Deſign, a Clearneſs in the Manner, a plain State of the Matter in Queſtion, a Strength of Reaſon, and a Temper becoming a Chriſtian and a Miniſter.

HE was often obliged to be concerned in *Matters of a publick Nature*; and certainly had a Head admirably turned for Buſineſs. The Compaſs of his Thoughts, and the Wiſdom of his Advice, would remarkably appear upon ſuch Occaſions, and was obſerved by many of high Rank. But in this Part of his Conduct, he was under the ſame Government of Religion and of a Regard to his Lord, as in all the reſt; and therefore was inflexibly honeſt in all, and abhorred any *Wiſdom of the Serpent*, which could not conſiſt with the *Innocency of the Dove*. He would never ſuffer himſelf to come in to a Court-Trick or a politick Doubling; nor could be affrighted, or allured, into Meaſures contrary, to the Intereſt of his Country: And quickly

quickly gave up an Intimacy or Friendſhip with the Greateſt, when they ventured to make any ſuch Attempt upon him. There is one Thing fit to be particularly remembered to his Honour: When ſome Meſſengers from the Court, in the Reign of King *James* II. endeavoured to bring the *Diſſenting Miniſters* of *London* into an Addreſs approving the *diſpenſing Power*; in a Conference upon that Occaſion, and in the Preſence of the Court-Tools, Mr. *Williams* bravely declared, "That as it was paſt "Doubt, that the *Severities* of the for-"mer Reign upon *Proteſtant Diſſenters*, "were rather as they ſtood in the way of "*arbitrary Power*, than for their *religious* "*Diſſent*; ſo it were better for them to "be reduced to their former Hardſhips, "than declare for Meaſures deſtructive of "the Liberties of their Country." This he purſued with ſo much Clearneſs, that all concerned rejected the Motion, and the Emiſſaries went away diſappointed. I will only add, That though he had frequent Occaſion to ſtand before *great Perſons*, yet he was far from affecting it, otherwiſe than as he had a Proſpect of doing ſome Service to Religion by it.

He was a hearty Mourner for the late melancholy Aſpect of our Affairs; and bore as great a Share as any Man in the Joy of His Majeſty King *GEORGE*'s peaceable Acceſſion to the Throne of theſe Kingdoms.

Kingdoms. The Safety of his Sacred Perſon, the Proſperity of his Royal Family, the Peace and long Continuance of his Government, the Direction of his Counſels, and the Suppreſſing of his Enemies, were the Subject of his daily Prayers; as they are of all his Brethren.

HIS *Eſtate* was chiefly uſed in doing Good. He exerciſed *a Frugality* as to his own Perſon, poſſibly to an Exceſs; but it was with this Deſign, (as he expreſſes himſelf in his laſt Will,) *that he might be the more uſeful to others, both in his Life, and after his Death.* And accordingly, the Bleſſings of many who were *ready to periſh* came upon him. Beſides, that Numbers of *Miniſters* and *Students*, who were in neceſſitous Circumſtances, received frequent and liberal *Exhibitions* from him. And I muſt ſay from my own Obſervation, that though he was naturally of a very *provident* Temper, and might not go ſo far as ſome others upon the mere Principle of Generoſity; yet where a Senſe of Duty, or a Proſpect of Service to any good Deſign called him to *diſtribute freely*, I have met with few Men *more ready* and furniſhed *to good Works.* They were no ſmall Sums of Money, which he entirely loſt among ſome, to whom he charitably lent them for their Support and Aſſiſtance in the World, upon apprehenſions of their

their good Character, or the hopes of promoting ſome uſeful Deſign thereby. And as he ſpent much of *his Life* in *Benefactions*, as God had proſpered him; ſo it was plainly his Aim at *his Death* alſo, to conſign the Body of his Eſtate to the greateſt Variety of *excellent Charities*, for the Glory of God and the Good of Mankind, that I remember to have met with within the Deſign of one Man.

Besides his watchful Care over his own Congregation, and the many *other Services* in the Pulpit and out of it, to which he was called *in this great City*; he had a very extenſive Concern for the Intereſt of Chriſt *in all Parts*; and was ready with his Advice, or Purſe, or Influence, to give his Aſſiſtance for advancing or ſupporting it, upon Applications even from the remoteſt Quarters. Not only *England*, but *Scotland* and *Ireland*, and the *American* Colonies, had a very large Share in his Concern: So that it might be applied to him, as truly as to any ordinary Miniſter I have known, that *he had upon him the Care of all the Churches.*

Though he was a ſteady *Nonconformiſt* upon Principle, yet he had a *charitable* Temper towards the *Eſtabliſhed Church*. This induced him at the Revolution to be very deſirous of *a Comprehenſion*, on condition of a *free Toleration* to ſuch

ſuch other Proteſtant Diſſenters as could not be included. But the Temper ſhewn by the prevailing Part of *Clergymen* at that Time and ſince, made him apprehenſive, that little Good was to be expected that Way: Yet he often expreſſed a firm Perſuaſion, "that God would in time bring "all *ſober* and *moderate Proteſtants* nearer "together, and find ſome Way of ſepa- "rating them more entirely from *the* "*looſe* and *the violent*."

I VERILY believe, that He governed himſelf ſteadily, in all the Provinces he was called to, by the Dictates of *his Conſcience*: And when that was determined, he was immoveable by any Temporal Conſiderations; but purſued what he thought right, with a blunt Integrity and unſhaken Reſolution. *For it was a little Thing with him, to be judged of Man's Judgment.*

THIS Firmneſs in proſecuting and going through with the many Affairs he was concerned in, without Regard to the Opinion of Men, muſt be expected to draw upon him *many Cenſures*, and make him *ſome Enemies*. But I muſt ſay, he had an unuſual Readineſs to *forgive his worſt Enemies*. He rejoiced in their Welfare, ſympathized with them in their Afflictions, willingly did good Offices for them afterwards; and ſeldom or never cared to ſpeak ill of them, or to hear others do it, without important Reaſon. The *Teſtimony of his*

his own Conſcience gave him ſufficient Satisfaction: But however *free* ſome People made with *his Reputation*, he was conſcientiouſly *tender* of that of *others*, eſpecially of *Miniſters*; as knowing how nice a thing *a good Name* is, and of what Conſequence to Men's Service in the World.

THAT which was his own beloved Character, *Simplicity and Godly Sincerity*; did above all things recommend others to his Eſteem; though it were found in the meaneſt People, or attended with very weak abilities, or diſcerned in thoſe of very different Sentiments from himſelf: For he truly *loved an honeſt man*, in whom there was *no Guile*, where-ever he met him.

IN ſuch a Courſe of Service to his Generation and Fidelity to his Lord, *having obtained help of God*, he *continued* to a good Old Age. But now it has pleaſed the great Lord of Life and Death to *put a Period* to this valuable and uſeful Life; and thereby to give Occaſion to many, to *lament ſo great a Breach*; eſpecially to *ſorrow moſt of all, that we ſhall ſee his Face no more*. This Congregation will enjoy no more the Inſtructions, the Overſight, the Prayers, of this able, experienced, and vigilant Paſtor. I am bereaved of a kind and tender Father, and a moſt affectionate Fellow-Labourer in the Lord. His Brethren

thren in the Miniſtry have loſt an agreeable Companion, a prudent Counſellor, and an eminent Ornament and Strength: The Diſſenting Intereſt, a zealous Friend and Supporter: And almoſt all the Churches, one who *naturally cared for them.* A Loſs it is, which will be *long felt*; and, I doubt not, more hereafter than at preſent. And impartial Poſterity will readily own his Merit, when all matters of Perſonal Difference ſhall be quite forgot.

THIS Loſs is the more ſenſible, becauſe it has ſo ſoon followed the Removal of *two other Miniſters* of principal Note and Worth for Experience, Fidelity, and Prudence, the one in *Scotland**, and the other in *Ireland* †; any one of whom would be *a general Loſs* to an Intereſt at any time. Yet,

(5.) THIS Subject furniſhes us with *juſt Grounds* of *Satisfaction* and *Support* under ſuch melancholy Providences.

AS we are *Chriſtians*, our great Deſire is, that *Chriſt may be pleaſed.* It was *his Will*, to call his faithful Servant to receive his Reward. He had *finiſhed the Work which he gave him to do*; and we are ſure, *the time he chuſes* for diſmiſſing any out of their Poſts of Service here, is upon all Conſiderations *the beſt*; though we might

* Mr. *Caſtaires*, Principal of the College of *Edinburgh*.
† Mr. *Blare* of *Londonderry*.

apprehend, their longer Continuance would ſerve many excellent Purpoſes.

OUR pious Friends or Miniſters, who are *dead in the Lord*, are certainly *well-pleaſed themſelves*; not only becauſe their Will is entirely reſolved into Chriſt's, but becauſe it is in itſelf *far better to be with him*. If we could hear them ſpeak, it would be the ſame Language with that of Chriſt to his Diſciples, *If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, becauſe I ſaid, I go unto the Father*. And ſince *Chriſt* and *they* are fully ſatisfied, *we* can have no Reaſon to repine. Good Men would not live here always, for they deliberately prefer the other State, and *deſire a better Country, that is, an Heavenly*.

John xiv. 28.

AND when Age and Infirmities grow upon them, then eſpecially we ſhould not grudge them *an Entrance into Reſt*, a Reſt from their Labours; or think much that they are called to go out of the Body to their God and Redeemer and Maſter, when their Bodies begin to become untenantable. The Removal of our *Reverend Father* was agreeable to a Deſire he often expreſſed, (and which wiſe and good Men in all Ages have concurred with him in,) *that if it pleaſe God, he might not outlive his Uſefulneſs*. There was indeed ſcarce any diſcernible Abatement in the *Capacities of his Mind:* But as he had turned the Age of man, ſo *Bodily Diſorders* greatly imbittered

imbittered Life, and began (in a manner unuſual to him) to ſequeſter him from his beloved Work in the Pulpit. 'Twas but *living* (as he often expreſſed himſelf in his laſt ſhort Sickneſs,) *a dying Life.* God gave him *his Wiſh* in calling him hence, before Nature ſunk under greater Infirmities.

'Tis a great Relief to us that ſurvive, that the *Example* of our *departed Miniſters* ſtill lives; and their *Inſtructions* are not all buried with them, if we are but in earneſt willing to recollect and improve them. We may *from both* ſee how to pleaſe our Maſter; and be excited by the Circumſtances of their Death to labour in our ſeveral Stations for that End. *Being dead, they yet ſpeak this.* And if we learn from them how to walk and to pleaſe God, *our Labour will not be in vain in the Lord*, any more than *theirs* was. We ſhall meet them with Comfort, and have a Share in the bliſsful Approbations of the ſame Lord.

F I N I S.

A

CATALOGUE

OF

The Sermons *and* Tracts *published by Dr.* WILLIAMS; *with the places where they stand in this Edition.*

1. THE *Kingdom of God in Power*: A Sermon preached before Sir *John Shorter*, Lord-Mayor, at *Grocers-Hall*, *Nov.* 20. 1687. 4*to*. Vol. I. pag. 1.

2. THE *Advancement of Christ's Interests, the governing End of a Christian's Life*: A second Sermon before the Lord-Mayor, *Jan.* 9. 1687-8. 4*to*. I. 53.

3. A THANKSGIVING-SERMON for the *Protestants Deliverance* from the *Irish Rebellion*, begun *Oct.* 23. 1641. preached *Oct.* 23. 1689. 4*to*. I. 117.

4. A SERMON on that Question, *What Repentance God requires for National Sins?* In the fourth Volume of Casuistical *Morning Exercises*. 1689. 4*to*. I. 173.

5. THE

5. THE *Vanity of Childhood and Youth*; being ſome Sermons preached in *Hand-Alley*, at the Requeſt of ſeveral Young Men. To which is added, *A Catechiſm for Youth*. 1691. 12*mo*.
Vol. V. pag. 157.

6. GOSPEL-TRUTH ſtated and vindicated; wherein ſome of Dr. *Criſp*'s Opinions are conſidered, and the oppoſite Truths are plainly ſtated and confirmed. 1692. 12*mo*. III. 1.

7. A DEFENCE of *Goſpel-Truth*; in Reply to Mr. *Chauncy*. 1693. 4*to*. III. 275.

8. MAN *made righteous by Chriſt's Obedience*; being two Sermons at *Pinners-Hall*, with Enlargements, *&c*. To which is added, A Reply to Mr. *Mather*'s Poſtſcript. 1694. 12*mo*. IV. 1.

9. AN Anſwer to Mr. *John Humfrey*'s ſecond printed Letter, wherein he publiſheth Mr. *Lobb*'s Objections againſt Mr. *Williams*'s Books. 1695. 4*to*. IV. 285.

10. THE *Excellency of a publick Spirit*: A Sermon preached at the Funeral of that Reverend Divine Dr. *Samuel Anneſley*. 1696. 12*mo*. I. 237.

11. THE *Anſwer to the Report, &c.* which the United Miniſters appointed their

their Committee to draw up: Alſo *Letters* of the *Biſhop of Worceſter*, and Dr. *Edwards*, to Mr. *Williams*, againſt whom their Teſtimony was produced by Mr. *Lobb*: And Animadverſions on Mr. *Lobb*'s Defence of *the Report*. 1698. 12*mo*. Vol. IV. pag. 309.

12. A SERMON preached at *Salters-Hall*, to the *Societies for Reformation of Manners* in *London*. *May* 16. 1698. 8*vo*. I. 383.

13. A POSTSCRIPT added to the Third Edition of *Goſpel-Truth ſtated &c.* for clearing ſundry Truths objected againſt, *&c.* 1698. 12*mo*. IV. 465.

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